

The Messenger

SEPTEMBER 2021 Volume 29 Issue 8

Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, 69 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431

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Contents

- 1 Worship Calendar
- 2 KUUC Mission & UU Beliefs
- 3-4 Sharing Ministry & Ministers Schedule
- 4 President's Message
- 4-6 Religious Exploration
- 6 Music Notes
- 6-7 Meet the Office Manager
- 7-8 Historic Highlight
- 8-9 Other News, Events & Updates
- 9-11 General Info, KUUC Contacts, etc.

Sunday Services are via live-stream. For the time being our Coffee Hours will be on Zoom. In-person worship coming again soon!

WORSHIP CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

[Our theme for September is "Embracing Possibility." Ask yourself: "Am I someone who embraces possibility or shies away from it? How can help my family see the possibilities for growth and adventure hidden within these difficult, ever-changing times?"

September 5th: "Are We Bending Toward Justice?" (Carl Jacobs)

The final service of our summer series will be led by Carl Jacobs, President of our Board of Trustees. Carl makes a question of the famous statement by Unitarian minister Theodore Parker. Can we be as certain of the inevitability of justice coming to the 2020's as Parker seemed to be at the end of the 1850s?

September 12th: "Defying Hopelessness" (Rev. Michael F. Hall)

On Ingathering Sunday---in spite of the fact that we yet know if we will be able to gather once again in person----we will find a meaningful way to share in the ritual of "Water Communion" and make it beautiful. We will also renew our commitment to a faith that challenges us to work for justice, to treat all people, (not just "our people"), with dignity and hold ourselves accountable to the interconnected web of all that exists. We are not people who preach about Hell and spread fear of the devil. We are those people who stand upon reason preach and champion an inexhaustible Love the is beyond mere belief.

September 19th: "The Best of Times or the Worst of Times" (Rev. Michael)

For some time now we have been living in a most distressing era: with the rise of unconscionable Capitalism, the stacking of the Courts and Congress, the repackaging of White Supremacy Culture the seemingly endless warfare and violence. So, is this the best that we can expect from now on, or the worst of what we have had to endure?

September 26th: "Faith And Works" (Rev. Emily Burr)

We covenant to affirm and promote our Seven Principles. If we truly want to promote our values, we must reach outward beyond ourselves with action. Our service today will be led by Rev. Emily Burr, with the entirety of the program paid for by the Downing Trust.

KUUC Mission Statement

The people of KUUC are committed to actively creating compassionate community and working for a fair and peaceful world.

THE SEVEN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PRINCIPLES

Our Seven UU Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a covenant made between our Unitarian Universalist congregations around the world. Many of our members use “The Principles” as a guide for how they choose to live their faith at home and in their communities.

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part

THE SIX SOURCES OF OUR LIVING TRADITION

As religious pluralists we draw upon multiple sources of inspiration in worship and daily life including:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic people, which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions, which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings, which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanist teachings, which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;

Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions, which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.



SHARING MINISTRY SEPTEMBER 2021

“When one door closes another door opens; but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us.” ---Alexander Graham Bell

Let's make a deal:

To remember all that we have been able to accomplish together since March 2020 in spite of formidable challenges: a frightening contagion spreading through a divided country, bringing with it confusion, business closings, dealing with changing protocols and quack alternatives.

To remember that we didn't survive it by folding our tents, but by keeping our heads and moving to meet the reality before us as it was, and as best as we could.

Let us remember too that rather than taking a timid posture, we kept our heads up, our minds open. We looked for opportunities while making smart decisions, we kept trying, scheming out new and different ways to be in community, to make quality worship happen each week, to smile through all those interminable Zoom meetings.

Let us remember how good it felt to be together however that togetherness was accomplished, especially when we got our first taste of the dual platform worship and several of us were actually able to attend worship in the Sanctuary.

Let us remember to take nothing for granted.

Remember how hard it was when we got sad or became frustrated and pulled away from this community.

Deal?

P. 3

After what we have learned, I know we are better suited to *anything that the future brings*, especially if:

- We keep our heads up, looking for new opportunities, making bold decisions.
- We keep creating new and exceptional worship and other programming for all ages.
- We each put in all the time, treasure and talent that we possibly can into KUUC.
- That we do not shrink from spreading the message of our faith, that we don't pooh-pooh its potential to heal a broken spirit, a hostile world or desecrated earth.

- That we never forget that this church, (like any other), is only ours in trust and by choice.

It is our responsibility to recognize that we are part of the continued life of this church and congregation. It is always evolving; it never is completed.

Our work is not simply to preserve what we have but see that it is ever green, always growing through inspired people embodying an inspiring mission.

Yours in Faith, Hope and Loving Service

Rev. Michael

Rev. Michael's Schedule & Office Hours for September:

OFF DAY: Saturdays except for September 11th;

REGULAR STUDY & PLANNING DAY: Tuesdays **WRITING DAY:** Fridays

STUDY TIME: Wednesday, September 1st through Friday, September 3rd.

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment. Call (508)821-6092

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Just when I thought we were moving toward in person worship and other activities, Covid reminded us we are part of an interconnected web of life. Fortunately, during recent months we have put in place ways to be together that do not require sharing the same physical space. In fact we have welcomed new people to our worship and other parts of our mission. We have accepted our circumstances and moved forward.

In a few weeks the Trustees will meet to discuss the Committee on Ministry Annual Report. We will take time away from day-to-day KUUC matters and set priorities for the year ahead. I look forward to a spiritually and intellectually strong experience. I expect there will be much to share with the congregation.

Carl Jacobs

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION (RE) NEWS

Hello again, Happy September! I really thought that by now things would be ... different. More the same, you know? Less foggy, less mask-y, more ... not this. But here we are, and my September 2021 message to you is eerily similar to my September 2020 message – let's try some things. Let's keep what works and ditch what doesn't. If you have some ideas let me know and we'll try those too. For now, this is what I'm thinking we'll try: **P. 4**

Saturday, September 11, 10am: meet me at Goose Pond in Keene for some time together outdoors! Outdoors is proving to be one of the best places we can be, and it's really the only choice in order to be together right now. Let's celebrate the start of the church year, school year, change of season, whatever feels celebratory to you, with a walk around the pond and some conversation. Bring a drink and a snack for yourself/your family (not a potluck! Soon, I hope, but not yet!) and probably some bug spray and I'll see you in the parking lot. I hope you'll tune in to KUUC's YouTube channel the following day, September 12, for our Ingathering service. (Or come to church! We won't know what the plan is till we get closer to the date, so watch those emails from Rev. Michael.)

Religious Exploration Offerings for Parents and Other Adults

Religious Exploration is not just for kids. We are all learning and growing into our UU identity, and I'd like to facilitate some RE experiences for adults this year. The problem is, there are so many cool things to do I can't choose, so tell me what YOU want to participate in.

[Faith Like a River: Themes from UU History](#) this curriculum explores themes in Unitarian Universalist history for adults, and asks the question, where do we go from here? If you follow the link, don't be overwhelmed by the number of sessions. Each one can stand alone, so it would be easy to pick a topic or two to talk about. If we liked it, we could keep going with other topics as long as the group found it rewarding.

[Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators](#) this is a 10-session small-group ministry program. It's a similar format to KUUC's Covenant Groups. This option has already been adapted for online use.

[Popcorn Theology](#) this popular curriculum uses movies to explore UU themes. This also has been adapted for use via Zoom. Several years ago I used parts of this program with some of KUUC's then-teens who are now young adults. This version is adapted for use with upper-elementary age through adults.

Which one(s) are you most interested? Send me an email at kuucdre@gmail.com or call or text 508-821-8935.

Right now I'm thinking that Zoom is the best way to get together, but I'm willing to talk about meeting as a small group in person as long as that's okay with our pandemic advisory team.

Of course, I'll still be involved in creating our Sunday worship services, act as admin support for the Our Whole Lives class, and will do my best to maintain connection **P. 5**

between and among our community while we are not all gathering in person. However, at this time, I am not planning any indoor RE activities for those under 12 years of age.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Jill

SEPTEMBER MESSENGER-MUSIC

The "Soul Matters" theme for September is "Embracing Possibilities". I love exploring the themes each month and choosing music to align with them. If you would like to participate in the music ministry by playing an instrument or singing, please be in touch with me. Everyone is welcome!

I enjoyed seeing some of you during the few "live" services we were able to have in August. It's a totally different experience to have people in the sanctuary to worship with.

In last month's Messenger article, I mentioned that I hadn't seen my entire family (21 and growing) for a year and a half. We are all gathering over Labor Day weekend (in a safe way) which I have taken off from church. You will be in good hands with Carl Jacobs leading the service.

Peace,

Donna

MEET OUR NEW OFFICE MANAGER:

Welcome Danielle Racine!

Danielle Racine, our new Office Manager, started with KUUC back in late July. We asked her to introduce herself to us this edition of the *Messenger*:

Although many of you have met me, I'd like to let everyone know a little about who I am. I was born in Maine and moved to New Hampshire at 6 years old. I grew up in the Monadnock area and think it home. My family and I come from both a Christian and Catholic religious background, but I am constantly trying to grow spiritually. I have three wonderful Daughters, Destiny, Trinity and Ayrabella. I have a wonderful husband, James.

Aside from being the Office Manager at KUUC, I'm also the new Office Manager at Port-o-Lite in West Swanzey.

In my free time, although I don't have a lot of it, my family and I love exploring new things and spending as much time as we can making memories with our girls. I love cats and currently have 4 of them, who make wonderful additions to our little family and I'm starting school to be a vet tech this fall. My hobbies include crafting, and music and singing are also very big ones in my household. I enjoy doing and selling makeup and skincare from home. I'm very excited to venture on this new journey with the church and grow not only mentally but spiritually as well. Stop by the office during the new open office hours and say hi!

Danielle

Office Manager, KUUC



HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS OF KUUC: SEPTEMBER

What follows is a short article highlighting an historic aspect of our church building. Information was gleaned from Jim Smart's 1996 book *The Keene Unitarian Universalist Church: the building and its people*.

The Roxbury Granite Company was hired to construct the church sanctuary, parish hall and the finished interior with the lowest bid of \$19,485. The cost did not include plumbing, heating or inside furnishings. Myron T. Cass supervised the crews of masons and carpenters who crafted the building.

Work began in April of 1894. The new technology of a steam shovel was used to excavate the site and dig the basement. A steam hoisting machine and large derrick placed in the center of the site was used to move the granite blocks of the foundation in place.

P.8

The masons laid 36" wide footers along the basement outlines of each hole. Atop the footers, the masons placed 24" pieces of rectangular granite. The walls rose from the footings eight feet to ground level. The stone continued from ground level another 11 feet to where the roof eaves begin. The rough cut of the granite was deliberately placed facing the exterior for a more rustic look.

On the outside, granite buttresses placed approximated 12 feet apart, further strengthened the walls for the support of the roof. Larger stones served as lintels over the basement windows and doors. On July 11, 1894 the cornerstone was laid.

Next time you visit the church notice the different sizes of stone and their slight color variations. The lintels above the openings for doors and windows are very impressive. Take a moment to appreciate the skillful placement of each stone thanks to the master stoneworkers of their day.

Eloise Clark

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS, MEETINGS, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, ETC.

MIDDLE EAST STUDY GROUP

The Middle East Study Group held its first meeting of the new church year on a very warm summer afternoon, August 26. The main topic of discussion was on the best method of making a public statement regarding the extremely unequal treatment Palestinians must endure under Israeli laws and customs.

The committee decided a statement would be best made with the Middle East Study Group making it clear that the statement came from it and not the whole congregation.

Attending the meeting were Rev. Michael Hall, Carol White, Jim Butterfield, David Robinson, Harry Bubb and Jim Smart.

UU CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES FELLOWSHIP GROUP

"REFLECTIONS AND NEW BEGINNINGS" September 7th at 5:00 PM

Our fellowship group meets the first Tuesday of every month from 5:00 – 6:30. We are now meeting in-person in the Alliance Room with the option to participate via ZOOM. We focus on a theme each month. For September we will focus on "reflections and new beginnings," inspired by the Jewish holiday Rosh Hashana. This group is for anyone inspired by the teachings of Jesus or who identifies with aspects of Christianity and would

like to share their experiences, feelings and insights in a supportive environment, and support one another's spiritual growth and understanding. This group is guided by our fourth Unitarian Universalist principle (a free and responsible search for truth and meaning") and free of the doctrine or dogma that has often characterized traditional institutional Christianity.

For information and Zoom meeting details,
contact Carol at 603-863-4920/ 603-398-5389 or cstamatakis@outlook.com.



GENERAL INFORMATION

NEXT MESSENGER DEADLINE NOTICE:

The deadline for the October *Messenger* is 5 P.M. on Thursday, September 23rd. The due date for *Messenger* submissions will be on the 23rd of the month prior to their issue (the only exceptions will be for the January issue---deadline December 15th---and the fact that there is no July *Messenger*). Send all your articles and notices to Rev. Michael at rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com and Danielle at office@kuuc.org.

COMMITTEE CONTACTS:

Circle of Caring:	Betsy Zimmerli & Betty Forrest
Covenant Groups:	Carolyn Antrim
Investment:	John Bordenet
Middle East Study Group:	Jim Smart
Membership:	Deb McLay
Music:	Open
Personnel:	Ruth Shepard
Religious Exploration:	Barbara Bryce
Senior Lunch Bunch:	Betty Forrest

Shawls of Love:	Darcy Doyle
Slice of Fellowship:	Betty Forrest
Social Action/Green Sanctuary:	Open
Stewardship:	John Walter
Ushers:	Tom Haynes
Wayside Pulpit:	Lindsay Bartlett
Worship:	Gwyn Powers
Property:	Carl Jacobs
Fundraising:	Open
Greens Sale:	Open
Welcoming Congregation:	Open

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

By Tim Atkins

KUUC CONTACT LIST 2021-22

WORSHIP SERVICES

STAFF

Sunday Services: 10:00 A.M. **Minister:** Rev. Michael Hall
Religious Exploration: 10:00 A.M. rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com
September-June (508) 821-6092
Summer Services 10:00 A.M. **Director, Religious Exploration:** Jill M. Hall
Address: 69 Washington Street kuucdre@gmail.com
Keene, NH 03431
Music Director: Donna Dearth
Phone: (603) 352-1719 rdearth@hotmail.com
E-mail: office@kuuc.org
Office Manager: Danielle Racine
Website: www.kuuc.org office@kuuc.org 352-1719
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