



# KUUC March Messenger 2024

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

Slice of Fellowship	Fri March 1 at 5:30 pm	Parish Hall
Shared Ministry Assessment	Sun March 3 at 11:30 pm	Sanctuary
Robinhood Park Sledding	Sun March 3 at 1:00 pm	Robinhood Park
Christian Scriptures Study	Tues March 5 at 4:30 pm	Alliance Room
MIP Film Screening	Thurs March 7 at 6:00 pm	Keene Public Library
Membership Committee	Sun March 10 at 11:30 am	KUUC Library
Executive Committee	Wed March 13 at 6 pm	Alliance Room
Religious Exploration	Sun March 17 at 11:15	KUUC Library
Book Club	Sun March 17 at 11:15 am	Alliance Room
MIP Book Discussion Group	Mon March 18 at 10:30 am	Covenant Living
Social Action Team	Sun March 24 at 11:15	Alliance Room
Choir	Every Thurs at 6:30 pm	Parish Hall
Kindness Crafting	Each Wednesday at noon	KUUC Library

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## Worship Calendar March 2024

Our Soul Matters theme of the month for March is “Transformation.” Have you ever had a time in your life that led to a complete transformation of body, mind and spirit? Can you remember a time when you helped bring about a transformation in your school, town, profession or the country? What 5 things would you suggest we do if we wished to transform our KUUC community?

### **March 3rd: “Transforming Time” Rev. Michael**

Many faith traditions have set aside particular holidays, or whole seasons, for self-reflection, for doing charity work or refraining from certain habitual responses to living. The goal is to live as close as possible to the source of our being and transforming ourselves from who we have been to the person we have always wished we could be. It’s the first Sunday of the month, and that means community-wide Joys & Concerns.

### **March 10th: “Remember Me?” Rev. Michael**

Some transformations are not kind at all, but, as with many health conditions can be woeful, catastrophic and debilitating. Many of us have felt the impact of one form of dementia or another in our lives. How do we prepare ourselves and others to live with the disease? How do we process the memories, feelings and impact that a loved one left us with during “the long goodbye”? The KUUC Choir joins us today. Bring a picture of a loved one that you lost to this terminal illness.

### **March 17th: “What About Us?” Rev. Michael**

On this day, we celebrate our community, congregation and church. As we move into our third century of free religion here in the heart of Cheshire County, what do know about KUUC’s history and

legacy? How do we want to expand upon that legacy and spread our message(s) to new and different people? Joys & Concerns.

**March 24th: “UU Climate Justice” Rev. Fred Small**

Rev. Fred Small is our guest speaker this week. He was a UU parish minister for nearly two decades, a respected singer-songwriter, and environmental lawyer. In 2015 he left parish ministry to devote his energies to advocating and organizing for environmental, racial, and social justice.

**March 31st: “Love Everlasting” The Worship Team**

What a beautiful time of year to be alive: to see the seasons change once again, to consider the spiritual stories of spring, to see new life beginning to emerge in birdsong and buds. In this time of transformation, renewal and rebirth let us celebrate natural magic all around us!

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## Reverend Michael’s Moment:

“I see the marks of God in the heavens and the earth, but how much more in a liberal intellect, in magnanimity, in unconquerable rectitude, in a philanthropy which forgives every wrong...I do and I must reverence human nature... I thank God that my own lot is bound up with that of the human race.”

-William Ellery Channing “Likeness to God”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY KUUC: 200 YEARS OLD AND STILL GOING STRONG!!

### How We Began:

The Keene Congregational Society now KUUC, was formed by law on March 1st 1824, and by a solemn covenant between the 12 members and 70 “associates” on March 18, 1824. This church was originally composed of a group liberal-minded women and men, some of whom were quite prosperous town leaders, who had been members of the First Congregational Church. That church, now the United Church of Christ, Keene had for generations been the Church, the only one in town. It was sponsored entirely by the government in the old way of the established order of standing churches. This assured that the fearsome Calvinist doctrine on the day would be taught and promoted among the citizenry--- and heretical ideas kept out.

According to S.G. Griffin in his A History of the Town of Keene, Sentinel Printing Co. ©1904:

“The controversy in the church which resulted in the secession of the Unitarians had been growing more and more sharp and bitter for several years and had now reached culminations.”

So obviously something had to be done. A new congregation founded.

No doubt the people who formed the new Keene Congregational Society were moved by the doctrine of the fledgling Unitarian movement, others among them may have had Universalist leanings too, as the belief in Universal salvation was all over this region; it had even been accepted by Clement Sumner minister in the First Church from 1761-1773. Most just wanted to hear a diversity of religious opinion and the Rev. Dr. Barstow, the new minister at the head of the square wasn’t having any of it, in a dispute made famous in printed tracts produced after the fact, Barstow barred at least one minister, the Rev. Dr. Aaron Bancroft of Worcester, MA, full liberty of the pulpit when he visited Keene.

Yet the new liberal religion, though vehemently denied by many, was not to be impeded from growing in adherents. From its inception, the Unitarian faith was an optimistic and hopeful one, with an emphasis on reason and experience and human potential.

The people who began our congregation worked dutifully to straighten out the affairs of the congregation. First they worked out with the (then) town a way to divide the Sundays out so that the now two congregations could each hold their fair share of services in the one building they had for worship at that time. In January 1826, the congregation that eventually would become KUUC, listened to the Rev. Thomas Russell Sullivan, their first settled minister preach his first sermon in that capacity. Soon enough, they resolved to build their first church building on the corner of Church and Main Streets.

So the story, their story and ours, had begun.  
Yours in Faith and Friendship,  
Rev. Michael

**Study Day:** Monday **Day Off:** Tuesday **Writing Day:** Thursday

**Visitation & Meetings:** Wednesdays & Friday (afternoons)

**Office Hours:** Fridays 8:30 AM-12:30 PM

**Odds & Ends:** Saturday 1/2 Day (as needed)

**Additional Days Off:** I will also be off from Thursday March 21-Sunday 24th as one of my contractual 4-day weekends.

Call with any questions or to schedule a visit at 508.821.6092

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## Music

This month the choir will sing during the services on 3/10 and 3/31. The theme for March is “Transformation” and the music will reflect on this theme of change.

Thanks to Dan Bartlett who played bass during 2 services in February and to Jane Stave-Viemester for subbing in for a few services. We are so fortunate to have such a rich musical community. The choir rehearses on Thursday nights from 6:30-8:00 in the parish hall. All are welcome to come try it out! The music committee always welcomes new members!

Please see me if you would like to be part of this group.

Peace to all,

Donna

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## Board President Report

Hello Beloved Community,

It is good to be back with the board after two months of working out protocols for how we can work together after such a difficult and hurtful email debacle. After many meetings with our UUA rep Evin, we came up with some parameters we all could agree on. We have some very hard work ahead of us, and to navigate through them, we agreed that we would work in Right Relationship, be Honest, Kind and Respectful with each other. We also agreed to work on finding an ombudsman or two for those times we need help. In short, hurtful communications will not be tolerated.

So onward with the work. We are moving forward with the evaluation process, both of the shared ministry as well as our minister. We are looking for teams of three or four (not just board members) to work on the evaluations and then present them to the board. Teams will be created at the next board meeting (so you might be asked to participate on a team) as well as which evaluation form we will use. We hope to then have the teams complete the evaluations by the April board meeting.

MEANWHILE we will be working with the information gleaned from our February 11th workshop with Evin to move forward with the budget, our building, and staffing. Many moving parts, but we feel

confident with all that is before us, that we are committed to thinking outside the box, keeping the doors open, filling the hall and continue to ground our decisions based on our UU principles.

Have a glorious March!  
Caroline Stave Viemeister  
Board President

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## Greetings from RE:

With school breaks behind us, we enter March looking forward to the spring...the bulbs in my yard have been ready for weeks! I'm excited to get the kids out into the children's garden but I may be getting ahead of myself, letting go of my PNW roots is hard this time of year I'm certainly not used to celebrating my birthday surrounded by snow.

We had some amazing offerings in February, including an incredible Chinese New Year Cards class and a Blocks class on observatories and telescopes.

### **RE Happenings in March:**

- 3/3 - In the Sanctuary, no RE offerings
- 3/10 - Casual activity based on attendance
- 3/17 - Offering from Betsy (More info to come!)
- 3/24 - Blocks
- 3/31 - Easter (more info to come)

Quick thank you to everyone's support and generosity as the program grows. We truly cannot do it without you.

-Mallory

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### **Monadnock Interfaith Project**

*Building An Interfaith Coalition for Community Understanding and Social Justice*

[WWW.MIPNH.ORG](http://WWW.MIPNH.ORG)

[MonadnockInterfaith@gmail.com](mailto:MonadnockInterfaith@gmail.com)



### **Collaboration with The Community Kitchen**



Connecting across differences, listening, and involving people who are closest to our community's challenges, these are important values of MIP.

At our January 24th Gathering we had a rich discussion about ways the interfaith community can build on each of our individual congregation's food security efforts.

We generated the following ideas to build on our relationship with The Community Kitchen:

- Eating with guests at The Community Kitchen, listening and building relationships.
- Sharing hobbies and interests with guests during meals, such as music, arts and crafts, etc.
- Increasing access to food in rural towns and coordinating across the region.

# Community Breakfast Program

“Hunger is not an issue of charity. It is an issue of justice.”

— Jacques Diouf, former director of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Program

A few weeks ago, our worship service focused on hunger. Did you know that KUUC members have been serving hot, nutritious breakfasts to our unhoused neighbors in Keene for nearly 11 years? The volunteers of the Community Breakfast Program have been scrambling eggs and offering kindness since 2013. Originally, the cooking and serving was done in our church kitchen and Parish Hall one morning a week during the cold weather (November to April). Then it was two days; then the program moved to the Community Kitchen, although still staffed by church volunteers. The hot meals were paused when the Community Kitchen closed during COVID, but volunteers continued to deliver cold breakfast items to the Hundred Nights Resource Room during this time.

Today, the Community Breakfast Program serves hot breakfasts 5 days/week at the new Hundred Nights shelter on Water Street. About 40 breakfasts are served each morning. Volunteer teams from KUUC, the UCC, Trinity Lutheran Church, the Knights of Columbus (St. Bernard's), and Congregation Ahavas Achim do all the work. Each church provides financial support and the volunteers for one morning a week – a true interfaith effort.

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## Shared Ministry Assessment

The Committee on the Ministry invites you to participate in KUUC's annual shared ministry assessment. "Shared Ministry" is the way our congregational members, minister, friends, and staff, support one another as we carry out KUUC's values of Community, Commitment and Compassion. Outcomes will be shared with the congregation and KUUC's Board of Trustees.

This year, there are 2 ways your voice can be heard:

1. On Sunday, March 3rd, 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM, an in-person forum will be held in the sanctuary.
  2. Via an online survey linked below, to be completed between Sunday, February 25th and Sunday, March 3rd. If you participate in the forum, you are also welcome to complete a survey.
- This type of feedback is typical of any organization that values learning about itself over time. It is not a personnel or ministerial evaluation, rather, it is an opportunity to gather information about how we all minister to one another as members of the KUUC community.

Here are the questions for you to consider:

1. What about KUUC brings you joy?
2. In what ways do you feel supported by the KUUC community? How do you support others in the KUUC community?
3. What factors may be inhibiting KUUC from being a supportive community?
4. What would this spiritual community feel, do, and be like if the shared ministry was fully realized?
5. What else about the KUUC community's support for one another would be helpful for us to know?

We look forward to hearing your thoughts in-person on March 3 or via the online KUUC Shared Ministry Survey.

Committee of the Ministry

Mickey Cronin, Rev. Michael Hall, Tom Julius

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# Slice of Fellowship

Next Dinner: Irish themed, Fri March 1, Wine and Cheese 5:30, Dinner at 6 pm

Slice of fellowship is a monthly potluck dinner open to all members and friends of KUUC. Our March potluck theme is "Get Yer Irish On!" Bring a friend or two or three and celebrate community with Irish food. There's always Guinness Stew, Corned Beef and Cabbage, Colcannon or whatever Irish recipe you can find on the internet.

Drinks (BYOB) and appetizers at 5:30 pm followed by dinner at 6:00. Please bring a veggie/salad, main dish or dessert to share. We'll sing a few songs and have a great time!

Please bring your own dishes, flatware and napkins. (Wine glasses and coffee mugs are supplied.)

Call Betty Forrest 603- 357-1534 or email [mandbforrest@myfairpoint.net](mailto:mandbforrest@myfairpoint.net) with any questions.

Please sign up for what you plan to bring using the Signup Genius link below. This will ensure we have a variety of foods.

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**MIP Book Discussion Group**  
**March 18, 10:30am-12pm**  
**Covenant Living of Keene, 95 Wyman Rd**

***First They Killed My Father:***  
***A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers***

Author, Loung Ung is a childhood survivor of the Cambodian genocide under the regime of Pol Pot. This is a riveting narrative of war crimes and desperate actions, the unnerving strength of a small girl and her family, and their triumph of spirit.

Copies of *First They Killed My Father* can be obtained at Toadstool Bookshops, online, or by emailing: [rpoor@covliving.org](mailto:rpoor@covliving.org).

A film screening and in-person lecture by the author are also scheduled. See details in the upcoming events section below.



## Upcoming Interfaith Events

In collaboration with the [Cohen Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies](#)

- **March 07**, Film Screening: *First They Killed My Father*, Huntress Auditorium, Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St, Thursday, • 6- 8:15pm
- **March 18**, MIP Book Group, *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* by Loung Ung, Covenant Living of Keene Community, 95 Wyman Rd • 10:30am-12pm
- **April 3**, Genocide Awareness Lecture featuring Loung Ung, KSC Mabel Brown Room or Livestream • 5:30pm
- **April 10**, Special Event - "The Light Inside the Dark: Witnessing in Empathy at Auschwitz" featuring Dr. Len Fleischer, KSC Alumni Center - Norma Walker Hall • 5:30pm
- **April 17**, MIP Interfaith Passover Seder, KSC Alumni Center - Norma Walker Hall • 5pm

Interested in interfaith efforts?

Visit our website [MIPNH.org](http://MIPNH.org) Follow us on [Facebook @MIPNH](#)  
Contact MIP anytime at [monadnockinterfaith@gmail.com](mailto:monadnockinterfaith@gmail.com)

## 2024-25 Stewardship Campaign

KUUC's annual Stewardship Campaign, in which members and friends are asked to pledge contributions for our 2024-2025 church fiscal year, begins in March. One of the definitions of stewardship is "the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving." Our goal for pledges is \$132,000, about 10 % more than this year's total.

KUUC needs your financial support to fund our staff, property, and programs. What we can accomplish together depends in no small part on our budget, which in turn depends primarily on Stewardship pledges. Not all of us are able to make a large pledge, but smaller pledges add up, and give us all an opportunity to show how much KUUC and Unitarian Universalism matter.

During March worship services we will hear from some KUUC members regarding what KUUC means to them and why they pledge generously. If you have pledged or made regular donations before, you should soon receive a brochure and a pledge slip. The slip asks how much money you wish to pledge to donate to KUUC between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025 (our next church fiscal year). Please make as generous a pledge as you can by the end of March, when our campaign ends.

Our congregation has a long, proud history. We (and the community at large) have been the beneficiaries of generations of the KUUC idealists and reformers who have given generously of their time, talent, and treasure. Let's pass it on to future generations.

With gratitude,  
The Stewardship Committee

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## Shining the Light on UU Potluck Dinner

SAVE THE DATE for our 6th Annual Shining the Light on UU potluck which will be coming up on April 14th from 5 to 7 pm in the Parish Hall.

Your Membership Committee has received many nominations of our dedicated volunteers to highlight. It promises to be a fun evening!

Switching it up a bit from last year, if your last name begins with:

A-G, please bring a side dish  
H-M, please bring a main dish  
N-Z, please bring a dessert

Of course, if you have a favorite dish that you make, please do so! See you there!

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## Monadnock Interfaith Project Partnership

The KUUC Board of Trustees is delighted to announce that at the February Board meeting we voted unanimously to join in a congregational partnership with MIP (Monadnock Interfaith Project). MIP is a non-profit coalition of congregations, organizations and wholehearted individuals working together to foster interfaith community, understanding, and systemic change that benefits the region.

For more information on MIP and the many events and projects that they sponsor, please contact Tom Julius or Susie Ericson-West.

And on a related note...

Are you interested in participating in social action, both at KUUC and in the greater Keene community? You are not alone! At the Shared Ministry workshop held in January, one topic that was discussed was bringing social action work back to KUUC.

To that end, we invite you to learn more about the KUUC Social Action Team! We hope to create a team of people who can work with others of like minds to follow their passions in various aspects of social justice. Please join us on Sunday, March 24th after coffee hour in the Alliance Room to help us create this team and share your thoughts!

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## UU Christian Scriptures Fellowship Group

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 5th at 5:00, in the Alliance Room or via ZOOM.

Our topic will be "Wisdom." In the Hebrew Scriptures, wisdom is personified as a woman. This has led to many interpretations and debate among theologians. According to one interpretation, "She is portrayed as a bridge between humanity and a transcendent God, between things secular and things divine. One finds God by finding wisdom. . ."

Our meeting provides a small group experience and opportunity to share and be heard on universal themes from the Bible and other sources in a supportive, non-judgmental setting. All are welcome to attend any meeting. This group follows the 4th UU principle (free and responsible search for truth and meaning) and is free of the dogma associated with traditional religion.

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 5:00. For information contact Carol at CStamatakis@outlook.com or 603-398-5389.

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# There are still spaces available for the KUUC Ferry Beach Get-Away Weekend May 10, 11, & 12, 2024

Our weekend is a wonderful intergenerational gathering. Imagine long walks on the beach, conversations in rocking chairs on the porch, playing board games, singing, joining various activities or just solitary time. The accommodations are rustic but the setting is majestic. Ferry Beach Conference and Retreat Center has changed their registration process. You will need to register directly with them for your room, meals and Church Weekend Membership. The on-line link is below or call 207- 282-4489 x110. Susan Hoang is our Ferry Beach contact person. Contact her at [shoang@ferrybeach.org](mailto:shoang@ferrybeach.org)

## Costs

Lodging: (price listed is the total for 2 nights) Options:

\$170/room = Underwood Dorm, sleeps 3

Bring own twin bedding, 1 single & 1 set of bunk beds

\$250/room = Cross Cabin (queen bed, linens provided, private bath

\$290/cabin = Metz Cabins = linens provided, private bath, living room with a pullout couch, bedroom full bed

FOOD 4 meals = Sat. breakfast, lunch, dinner & Sunday breakfast

\$64 = Adult 13 years +

\$52 = Children = 6-12 years

Church Weekend Membership = \$10/adult

For further info contact Carol McIntyre-Peale or Jim Peale

at 603-357-7875, or [pealefamily@gmail.com](mailto:pealefamily@gmail.com)

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## Historic Highlights of KUUC by Eloise Clark

Plans for the new Unitarian church were completed by architect Edwin James Lewis, Jr. by April of 1894. He designed the building to be fashioned in the “English style”, a combination of Gothic and Tudor Revival styles.

Work began later that month. 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.

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 foundations in place for both the sanctuary and Parish Hall.

The masons laid 36” wide footers along the 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 were placed about 10 feet apart, further strengthened the walls for the support of the roof. Larger stones served as lintels over the 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.

Thanks to Jim Smart's 1996 book, *The Keene Unitarian Universalist Church: its Building and the People*. Jim's book can be borrowed from the church. It's a fascinating read.

I would be happy to send an electronic copy of the recently completed *Historic Building Assessment of the Keene Unitarian Universalist Church* by Scully Architects to anyone interested. It was partially funded by a grant from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP); a program within the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.