

Weekly E-Blast

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

In this Issue:

- [Upcoming Services](#)
- [Upcoming Special Events](#)
- [Ongoing Connections](#)
- [Notices / Updates / News](#)
- [COVID-19 Updates / News](#)
- [General / Contact Info](#)



69 Winthrop St., Augusta ME
(207)622-3232 – info@augustauu.org
www.augustauu.org

A Message from the Minister

Many changes are happening at the UUC. By now, you have probably seen my email telling the congregation that I will be leaving at the end of July. It was hard to send, especially since I have grown fond of this church. The UUC community has been kind, open, and accepting of me and my ministry. Thank you for that. The board is considering the ministry options for next year and will be communicating about that soon. The board also passed a plan to reopen the congregation. Please look forward to news from me and the worship arts team about hybrid worship in the coming month. So many changes, so many mixed emotions as we move forward!

We find ourselves in the Christian season of Lent. March 2nd was Ash Wednesday, one of my favorite days in the Christian liturgy. This year, I received ashes from a chaplain at MaineGeneral. It was a reminder of my time as a hospital chaplain, running around the building distributing ashes to all who wanted them. I appreciate Ash Wednesday because when receiving ashes, the giver says to the receiver, "remember that you are dust, and to dust, you shall return." While this is traditionally a reminder of sin and the need to repent before death, I value it from a realistic perspective. I want to be reminded that I am a fragile human who will eventually die and to appreciate my life while I have it. For me, Ash Wednesday is a reminder to live life to the fullest.

A second nudge, if you are interested in leading a summer service, get in touch!

As always, you are invited to reach out to me for any reason. I am available for a conversation by appointment. As an interim, I am especially interested in getting to know individual members and hearing your thoughts. Additionally, I am available for pastoral care conversations on a range of topics. I continue to offer weekly **"Coffee with Chloe" sessions on Tuesdays from 10-11 am** on the church zoom.

Blessings,
Chloe Briede, Interim Minister

chloeuucc@gmail.com
207-623-3663

Upcoming Services

Worship Theme: March Renewing Faith

Let us explore the challenges and adventures of Renewing our Faith.

<p style="text-align: center;">THIS Sunday March 20, 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:00 a.m. via Zoom</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"Wonder and Awe" Chloë Briedé, UUCC Interim Minister</p> <p>Our theme this month is "Renewing Faith." How can we draw faith from the world around us? Chloe will reflect on her spiritual practice of recognizing the awesomeness of the universe and our existence in it.</p> <p>Special thanks to our worship associate, Susan Claska Burnett and our pianist, Karen Allen.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Please join Board members for a Special "What's on Your Mind/Listening Circle" on <i>Sunday, March 20th, from 11:00-12:30 pm.</i> directly following the church service. Just stay on the church zoom room to participate.</p> <p>Our goal for this session is twofold.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primarily, we want to give congregational members a chance to discuss or share feelings about Minister Chloe's plans to leave at the end of the year.• Secondly, we want to canvas your thoughts about the kinds of work left to do during our interim period. <p>As always, the Board will be there to answer questions you might have. Questions? Contact Kathy Ann Shaw, Board President at kathyannshaw@roadrunner.com.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">NEXT Sunday March 27, 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:00 a.m. via Zoom</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"A Leap of Faith" Chloë Briedé, UUCC Interim Minister</p> <p>Sometimes in life, we can carefully plan out our next decision, our next move. But, sometimes must take a leap of faith. Chloe will reflect on the theme of faith and how having faith can help us through transitions or uncertain times.</p> <p>Special thanks to our worship associate Susan Claska Burnett, our Sunday tech Marty Peters, and our pianist Stef Barley. We may also have a new video from the choir.</p>

All services and events are held in the UUCC Zoom Room unless noted.

[Click here to join:](#)

For other ways to join Zoom, see [General Information](#)



Did you miss the following services?

Sunday 3/6/22 –“Stewardship Sunday” - with Chloë Briedé, UUCC Interim Minister

Watch the complete service by clicking the following link: [Link to 3/6 "Stewardship Sunday" service](#)

Sunday 3/13/22 –"Invitations to Faith" with Visiting Minister, Rev. Meg Mathieson*

Watch the complete service by clicking the following link: [Link to 3/13 "Invitations to Faith" service](#)

Special Events / Opportunities

*"Coffee with Chloë **CONTINUES**"*



Minister Chloe will continue (through March) the informal church zoom room on **Tuesdays from 10-11 am** to chat and check in with UUCC-ers.

No RSVP required; drop in when the spirit moves. Chloe is calling this event “**Coffee with Chloë**,” but feel free to bring a beverage of your choice.

Social Justice Committee: Opportunity to help Ukraine refugees

**** TIME to help EXTENDED ****

Nancy Fritz’s son lives in the Czech Republic. There are more than 40,000 Ukraine refugees in the Czech Republic; thousands more are expected. The people of the Czech Republic are opening their homes to as many refugees as they possibly can, including Nancy’s son Jeff and daughter-in-law Mel. Jeff is driving a van full of humanitarian supplies to the Ukraine border and bringing Ukrainian refugees back to the Czech Republic.

We have an opportunity to help in this effort by bringing a check made payable to Nancy Fritz to the church office (or drop in the Summer St. mail slot at the church). **We will continue to collect checks until the end of the day on Tuesday, March 22.** The checks will be collected on Wednesday March 23 and given to Nancy Fritz for deposit into her account. These funds will be transferred by Nancy to Mel’s bank account and will be used to support the refugees in the Czech villages.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION NEEDED

Why does MUUSAN **oppose LD 1959** - An Act to Ensure Transmission and Distribution Utility Accountability?

1. On the surface it appears to hold CMP and Versant more accountable, but, on closer examination, it's clear that it really doesn't.
2. It shifts all the power over the process to the governor and removes legislative oversight and a mechanism for public input.
3. It makes the path to creating a Consumer-Owned Utility for Maine virtually impossible.
4. It gives any governor the authority to kill a Consumer-Owned Utility.

Would you like to better understand this bill to take action? This important article by Gordon Weil (Maine's first Public Advocate) gives a very important analysis of why this is a bad bill. **[Click here for the link to Weil's article.](#)**

As written, L.D. 1959 does nothing for energy affordability, energy democracy or even real accountability. For additional information about the bill read [this](#) or [this](#) public testimony.

For an easy action, use this link:

[Tell your State Representative and Senator to vote against LD 1959](#)

You can also write your own letter:

[Write a letter to your legislator urging them to vote no on L.D. 1959](#)

Other Important Climate Change & Environmental bills to ask your state legislators to vote to SUPPORT:

[LD 1634](#) - An Act to Create the Maine Generation Authority.

[Click here to read an OpEd by Richard Silkman about the Maine Generation Authority](#)

[LD 1579](#) - An Act To Transition State and Local Motor Vehicle Fleets to 100 Percent Zero-emission Vehicles.

[LD 489](#) - Pine Tree Amendment.- To learn more about this bill go to: www.pinetreeamendment.org/

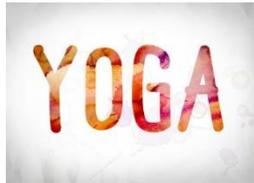
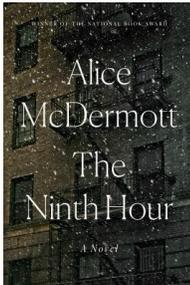
[LD 1639](#) - An Act to Protect the Health and Welfare of Maine Communities & Reduce Harmful Solid Waste.

The NRCM has an easy page to use to send emails to your legislators regarding LD 1639 (or you can contact them directly, of course). Please put your own name and address in the form:

[Send a message to your lawmakers](#) urging them to close the out-of-state waste loophole and conserve Maine's landfill space for Maine people.

Connections by Day of the Week

ALL church events and meetings are reflected on the UUCC calendar
Click below to view ALL events, including any group meetings or other business meetings.
<https://www.augustauu.org/calendar-and-communications/>

<p><u>Monday</u> Each week</p> <p><u>6:30 – 8:00</u> <u>p.m.</u></p>	<p><u>Peaceful Heart Sangha</u></p> <p>You may join us at 6:15 to settle in.</p> <p>Please contact Marty Soule for updated login information at email martysoule@gmail.com. FMI: peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com</p>	
<p><u>Wednesdays</u> Each Week</p> <p><u>5:00 – 6:00</u> <u>p.m.</u></p>	<p><u>Gentle YOGA</u></p> <p>Hosted by Debbie Mattson</p> <p>Please join us a few minutes before 5:00 to settle in so we can begin our class right at 5:00 p.m. Click the link below to join. https://maine.zoom.us/j/95825651125?pwd=UWJpOVFjVFJGb3dMWmZoOTRXa3VoUT09 Password 174192 - FMI: DebbieMattson@hotmail.com</p>	
<p><u>2nd & 4th</u> <u>Wednesday</u></p> <p><u>10:30 a.m. -</u> <u>Noon</u></p>	<p><u>Seasoned Souls</u></p> <p>Seasoned Souls is a group of older church members that meet as a study/support group to talk openly about topics related to the aging process. Seasoned Souls is open to any church member over 65 years of age. We will meet in the UUCC Zoom Room.</p> <p>FMI: please contact Diane (dmoongrove@gmail.com or 446-6162) or Stefanie (stefbarley@gmail.com or 629-8890)</p>	
<p><u>Thursdays</u> Each Week</p> <p><u>8:00 – 9:30</u> <u>a.m.</u></p>	<p><u>Peaceful Heart Sangha</u></p> <p>You may join us at 7:45 a.m. to settle in. Meet from 8-9:30</p> <p>Please contact Marty Soule for updated login information at martysoule@gmail.com. FMI: peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com</p>	
<p><u>1st</u> <u>Thursday</u></p> <p><u>Noon-1:30</u> <u>p.m.</u></p> <p><u>Next Meeting</u> <u>is: April 7</u></p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>Our next meeting will be April 7, 2022. We will meet in the UUCC zoom room from Noon – 1:30 p.m. to discuss <u>The Ninth Hour</u> by Alice McDermott. Anyone interested in this book is welcome to join us whether or not you have attended before. FMI about this or any meeting of the group, contact June Zellers at jzellers@roadrunner.com or Kathy Kellison at kell6787@gmail.com We would love to have you join us.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>A magnificent new novel from one of America's finest writers—a powerfully affecting story spanning the twentieth century of a widow and her daughter and the nuns who serve their Irish-American community in Brooklyn. -- Goodreads</i></p> </div> </div>	

- More Connections by Day of the Week -

<u>2nd & 4th</u> <u>Thursday</u> <u>9:00 – 10:30</u> <u>a.m.</u>	<u>Writing Group</u> This is an open group that gathers and writes together to explore spiritual themes. The writing is used as a conveyance to connect more deeply with ourselves and each other. We are not writing to develop skill. Come and try it out; there is no obligation to come each time we gather. We meet in the UUCC Zoom Room.
<u>4th Sunday</u> <u>1-2:30 p.m.</u> Next Meeting is March 27	<u>Goddess / Earth Circles</u> We are continuing exploration of Wicca: March 27 - Mysticism and Spirituality, and Karma and the Afterlife April 24 – Ancestry May 22 - Magic, Ethics and Morality June 26 - Other Topics for Consideration Resource: A Beginners Guide to the Wiccan Religion: https://wiccaliving.com/what-is-wicca Goddess/Earth Circles focuses on Goddess, women’s lives and earth-based spirituality. All ages and genders welcome. More information on UUCC website. Leader for the series is Mary Shifman (213-9760, shifmanmary@gmail.com).

Notices / Updates / News

Financial information from UUCC Treasurer for February 2022

At the recent What’s on Your Mind? session, a request was made that information about the finances at UUCC be put into the e-blast. SO....Here it is!

As the treasurer, I present a draft of the monthly report to the finance committee on the first Thursday of the month meeting. Edits, corrections, questions are shared, and a final report is done for the Board for the meeting on the third Thursday of the month. Each report is for the previous month’s income and expenses. This changes as new expenses are paid and new income is deposited into the bank accounts.

The figures below are from the Feb. Board meeting report. They represent all activity through Feb 28, 2022. This is 67% of the fiscal year. There are 4 months to go to the end of the fiscal year (June 30).

Pledges paid to date: \$126,789 which is 87% of the goal of \$145,500.

Annual appeal: Donations of \$6,180 without the match added yet.

Offering received during services: \$65.00

Total income from all sources: \$187,821 which is 727% of budget goal of \$241,880

Total expenses to Feb 28, 2022: \$137,116 leaving a positive balance of \$50,705.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Martha Naber, Treasurer, at marthanaber73@gmail.com.

Press [Ctrl-Home] to return to Pg. 1



As we know, UUCC member Robert (Bob) Rand passed away on Sunday, January 30, at MaineGeneral after a long illness. Bob's obituary is now available at <https://www.centralmaine.com/2022/03/10/obituaryrobert-a-rand/>.

Information about a celebration of life will be forthcoming.

It's Auction Time



We announce a "Special Auction" this year, for one week, during which we will auction off ONLY two Work Crews (no other services or items).

One work crew will be led by Marilyn Dunn and the other by Michaela Loisel. Each work crew will be made up of 8-10 able-bodied members and friends of the church. You will decide ahead of time the chores to be done and the tools that we will need.

The work crew arrives at your property ready to fix, paint, assemble, rake, trim, plant, wash, scrape and much more! We can accomplish almost any chore. Just ask people who have won previous work crew bids, such as Nancy Fritz, Kathy Ann Shaw, Kevin Kane and Hannah Faulkner.

You will be asked to provide paint, if needed, and we would all appreciate it if you made lunch for the crew.

Here's how it works:

Beginning March 25, at 5 p.m., you may bid on a work crew (we will let you know who will be your team leader). Email your bid to the auction coordinator, Catherine Palmer, at palmercatherinemaine@gmail.com. **Anyone can bid, whether or not you are an active participant in our community. So... if you know anyone that needs work done, let them know about this opportunity!**

She will let you know if you are outbid, so you can increase your bid and win the Work Crew! The auction **ends on Thursday, March 31, also at 5 p.m.**

If there is a friendly bidding contest occurring at the end of the week, Catherine will keep it open until no one sends a higher bid for three minutes. Then she will announce the winner to all bidders! Cash, checks and credit cards accepted.

Your work crew leader will recruit all volunteers. **Bid high as this is our only auction fundraiser this year!**

Press [Ctrl-Home] to return to Pg. 1



**Augusta
Recovery
Reentry
Center**
www.thearrc.org

Did you know about the Augusta Recovery Reentry Center (ARRC) at 2 Bangor St. in Augusta?

The mission of the ARRC from its website is:

*The ARRC is a grassroots project to co-create a community space that is inclusive, sustainable, and celebrates and supports **all people impacted by addiction and mass incarceration.***

The center is offering MANY wonderful programs including 12 step programs of all kinds (some well know and some new programs), Roses Room, self-improvement and self-care programming, alternatives to suicide programs, Arts & Crafts, Computer Basics, Work Readiness programming, a Music & Open Mic Night and much, much more..

If you or anyone you know could benefit from this center – SPREAD THE WORD! You may contact admin@augustauu.org for the current list of programs or check out the website at info@thaarrc.org for more information.

Our donations to the UUSC’s Guest at Your Table program totaled \$573.50



Hello! I’m Laura Randall from UUSC and I’m here to say thank you so much for your participation in this year’s Guest at Your Table program. With all of the adaptation, uncertainty, and sorrow

these last few years have brought us, your congregation is acting as a beacon of hope and solidarity for our grassroots partners around the world. Guest at Your Table is a long-standing tradition in our congregations and provides a unique opportunity every year to get to know some of our partners on a deeper level. Learning someone’s story can be a sacred act and it is one that we celebrate through Guest at Your Table.

With your support, you are helping to ensure that UUSC’s commitment to advancing human rights and resisting oppression can rise to meet this moment. Thank you for saying yes to the world we seek, a world filled with more justice and more compassion for everyone; a world that recognizes the inherent dignity and power in each and every person. Thank you for being an integral part of UUSC. We are your service committee and we could not do this without you.

Thank you,

Laura Randall and all of us at UUSC

Board of Trustees

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS for the March 10th meeting will be forthcoming.

At the March 20th meeting, the Board approved a new Reopening Plan.

The plan is summarized by the COVID-19 Advisory Group in its article below.

The full Reopening Plan is attached to this E-Blast.



Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta

SPECIAL Board Meeting A G E N D A

March 24th, 2022 - 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/8238070673>, then enter passcode: 6971

Join by phone: dial 1 646 558 8656, at first prompt (meeting id: 823 807 0673#)

Chalice lighting

Check-In

Introductions with special guest, Joe Sullivan, NE UUA

NEW BUSINESS

Outline of NE UAA experience with the Interim Process

Discussion of UUCC options for FY22-23 Interim Minister selection process

Adjourn

COVID-19 Updates / News

Update from COVID-19 Advisory Group

We bring you glad tidings of great news. On Thursday, March 10th, the UCC Board of Trustees adopted a new plan to reopen the church to in person gatherings.

This reopening plan makes use of a brand new metric for determining the local risk of community transmission of COVID-19. We have adapted the recently released United States CDC Community Level assessment guide as our metric for phased reopening. This assessment guide rates each county on three separate metrics and assigns a color code of green, yellow or red based on the level of COVID risk in that county.

We will be using those color codes to determine what level of physical distancing is necessary to minimize the risk of COVID exposure to our attendees during in person church gatherings. Green = 3 foot distancing, yellow = 6 foot distancing and red = no in person gatherings. Kennebec County is currently yellow.

We are investigating the installation of a church ventilation system &/or other ways to further reduce COVID risk to our attendees. Currently, our reopening plan requires that we open all the doors and windows to allow natural ventilation to reduce virus aerosols. Additionally, we will be requiring all attendees to wear high quality masks as defined by the CDC at all times while inside the building.

We strongly urge all attendees to be fully vaccinated including all appropriate booster shots. It is very important that each person fully evaluate their personal health risk factors as well as their own risk tolerance related to COVID-19 to decide if in person attendance is right for them.

We will be hearing lots of additional information on the plans for reopening from the Board and Worship team over the next few weeks.

Dr. Don on Covid-19

Dr. Don on COVID-19 The Omicron BA.2 Variant and What Wastewater Is Telling Us

Since COVID spreads like the common cold and like other viruses, it appears COVID is not going away. As expected, it is changing, acting more like a wildfire that feeds on opportunity to spread, despite all emotional, political and fatigue inspired wishes. Hope is not a public health strategy.

A new COVID Omicron variant is beginning to cross the country. The BA.2 subvariant now makes up nearly a quarter of new COVID-19 infections nationwide, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated Tuesday, up from around 1 in 10 new cases just a week prior. BA.2's prevalence is the highest in the Northeast, according to the CDC's estimates. In the region spanning New York and New Jersey, the agency estimates 39.0% of circulating viruses are BA.2. In New England, prevalence of BA.2 is at 38.6%.

It is reassuring that COVID BA.2 infections are generally milder, the scientists said, and that vaccines continue

to help protect against severe illness and hospitalizations. Because it is already significantly more contagious than any other COVID variant, the study also noted that the higher susceptibility to infection and greater transmissibility, BA.2 will likely result in more extensive spread of the virus among the unvaccinated and particularly kids in schools and day care. Researchers acknowledge the new variants are less susceptible to monoclonal antibody treatments, but pointed to other options, like the COVID-19 antivirals pills from Pfizer and Merck which so far appear to remain effective at treating BA.2 infections.

Although official counts of COVID infections and hospitalizations are still declining, new wastewater data updated this week from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows the United States may be seeing the beginnings of an uptick in COVID infections. Between Feb. 24 and March 10, 37% of wastewater sites that are monitored by the CDC have seen an increase of 100% or more in the presence of the COVID virus in their wastewater. Approximately 30% of these sites have seen an increase of 1,000% or more.

"It is likely we will see a new rise in cases across the United States as our wastewater data is showing a concerning signal," said Rebecca Weintraub, assistant professor of global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School. "Now is a key moment to communicate why we need to accelerate the uptake of the COVID vaccine, remind communities why boosters are needed, secure an ongoing supply of tests and N95 to communities, especially the red zones."

Wastewater surveillance has been a tool used as a preliminary indicator of COVID-19 trends in the U.S. Because asymptomatic patients can shed the virus, wastewater surveillance can capture infections that may not have been identified in official counts. In addition, many Americans are taking at-home COVID-19 tests and are not reporting their results to officials, and thus, experts say, infection totals are likely undercounted.

Send your questions, comments or suggestions to donnaber1364@gmail.com

General Information

**All worship services AND virtual events (unless noted) are held in the
UCC ZOOM ROOM**

Other ways to UCC Zoom Room Zoom:

- 1. Join from your internet browser by clicking this link or typing this into your browser:
<https://zoom.us/j/8238070673>, launch Zoom, then enter **passcode: 6971****
- 2. Select "Join Meeting" from the Zoom application on your computer or mobile device.**

UCC Meeting ID: 823 807 0673 – then enter **passcode: 6971**

- 3. Join by phone: dial 1 646 558 8656 (NOTE: toll charge may apply)**

At first prompt (meeting id: 823 807 0673#)

At second prompt: press # (no personal id needed) <No passcode needed when joining by phone>

NOTE---*6 is mute AND un-mute on your phone. The host cannot mute or un-mute people who phone-in.

HOSTS: Once in your meeting, claim the host using the HOST KEY as you have done in the past.

Ad-hoc Covid-19 Advisory Group

This group has generously volunteered to be available to support members with personal safety, health or travel questions, concerns, or anxieties. Feel free to reach out to one of them directly.

Betty Cairn, RN	StonehengeMaine@yahoo.com	207-215-6394
Terry Lee Cairn, ND, MSOM, Lac.	tlcnaturalhealth@yahoo.com	207-557-2557
Harry Grimmnitz, MD	hgrimmnitz@gmail.com	207-685-9270
Don Naber, Ed.D	donnaber1364@gmail.com	207-887-1104
Cathie Nielsen, MD	cathieenielsen@gmail.com	207-441-0248
Marty Soule, PA-C	martysoule@gmail.com	207-685-9270

UCC Pastoral Ministry Team

We are here for you. Feel free to reach out in times of need for compassionate listening, for casual conversation, to share some good news, to share your struggle or just to say hello.

Martha Pelletier, Chair	207-685-9592 (H)	Mjpell14@roadrunner.com
Helen Zidowecki	207-582-5308 (h)	hzmre@hzmre.com
Tracy McNaughton	207-623-3110 (h)	tracy.mcnaughton@yahoo.com
Peggy Lamb	207 622-5174 (h)	plambflowers@outlook.com

Caring Cooperative support includes rides, meals, errands, get well and condolence cards as well as companion visits.

If you would like to request or suggest meal support: contact Martha Pelletier 685-9592.

If you would like to request or suggest cards: contact Angie Blevins, 592-5655 or Peggy Lamb 622-5174.

UCC Small Group Ministry



Looking for greater human and spiritual connection during this most disconnected of times? Small Group Ministry offers this vital need in our spiritual community, and so much more! For more information, contact Michael Conley at 207-248-7948 or at es-therpearl67@gmail.com.

UCC Office Hours – NEXT WEEK

UCC Office Hours

Tues, Wed, Thurs and Friday

8:00 am to 1:00 pm. <plus 7 flex hrs >

Church Administrator: Lynn M. Smith,

admin@augustauu.org or 622-3232

Interim Minister, Chloë Briedé

Email: chloeuucc@gmail.com

Office: (207) 623-3663

For pastoral emergencies please call her cell phone (757) 234-1303. She will return your call as soon as possible.

Minister Briede's office hours:

Monday No office hours - Sabbath

Tuesday Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Friday No office hours – Writing day

<Other hours available by appointment>

Staff Contact information:

Church Administrator, Lynn M. Smith, admin@augustauu.org, Phone 622-3232

Coordinator of Lifespan Faith Formation, Monique McAuliffe, LifespanFF@augustauu.org

Music Director, Bridget Convey, musicdirector@augustauu.org