



Sanford Unitarian Universalist
Church
Sanford, Maine

Sanford Unitarian Universalist Church
UU NOTES Volume XLIV
September 2020, Issue 3

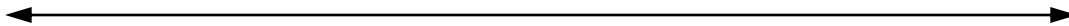
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Religious Education Directors:
Mesha and Ryan Quinn
Pianist: Ruth Leipold
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Maintenance/Sexton: Bill Ouellette

UUA PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- * 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 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.

(Adopted by the 1984 and 1985 General Assemblies)



Services Continue to be Celebrated Online via Zoom

Information regarding connecting to church services will be emailed to the congregation and posted on our website and our Facebook page as soon as it becomes available.

September 6th - *In Times Like in These* - Bob Ortiz

September 13th - *All Rivers Run to the Sea: Gathering of the Waters* - Rev. Shay MacKay

September 20th - *You Contain Multitudes* - Rev. Shay MacKay

September 27th - *The Butterfly Effect: Exploring Our 7th Principle* - Rev. Shay MacKay



Rev. Shay's Sharing...

September Theme ~ Connection

“If everything is connected to everything else, then everyone is ultimately responsible for everything. We can blame nothing on anyone else. The more we comprehend our mutual interdependence, the more we fathom the implications of our most trivial acts.

We find ourselves within a luminous organism of sacred responsibility.”

~ Laurence Kushner in *Invisible Lines of Connection*

I spent the summer deepening connections with my immediate family, and feeling like I was getting further and further away from others in my life, even from the entire rest of the world, as this pandemic continued to keep me at home. As I retreated more deeply into the small world of Diana, Aidan, our cats, and our home, I began to lose touch with friends and family. There were voicemails and emails that went unanswered, zoom meet-ups postponed or cancelled. But at some point my head broke through into enough reality that I realized it wasn't just me that neglected those connections; there were messages *I had sent* that were never answered, phone calls never returned.

A good friend, after weeks of silence between us, finally just called and we had a hard conversation about expectations and disappointments regarding our communication patterns. I apologized and promised to try to do better, she allowed for a little more latitude in her expectations of me. We both had work to do to balance the give-and-take of that relationship.

On the flip side, a different friend was not responding to my messages and I was getting frustrated and so I called her and had a similar conversation, but this time I was the one giving grace and understanding and she was the one promising to try harder.

Communication, my therapist keeps reminding me, is a two-way street. We all have our individual habits and quirks, our areas of strength and weakness; we all have preferred styles and timelines and word choices, etc. And we all have the responsibility to do our part, to try our best, to learn from our mistakes, and to offer grace – to ourselves and to others.

Here's what I know: so very many of us are yearning for connection to the people and places we love, people and places that are out of our reach right now. I know this community is hurting at the distance between us and longing for some way to bridge those gaps.

Here's what else I know: Covid-19 isn't going away and we can't be with each other in the ways we want so desperately to be. I know that communication feels even more important and more fragile during this time, and it only partially assuages the pain of our separateness.

Continued next page...

Rev. Shay's Sharing Continued...

And finally, what I know is this: I am committed to do everything I can to improve my communication with you. I am promising to discover and try as many opportunities for connection as I can. And I know that I care deeply for each of you and for this community. I hope you know that, too.

"We find ourselves within a luminous organism of sacred responsibility."

I am only one part of this luminous organism of SUUC – **and**, I am only a half-time part of it. What this means is that I need you. I need you to take initiative, to take responsibility, to step up and reach out. **We** need you to be an active part of this congregation, to keep us luminous and thriving and alive. You have seven incredible people that stepped up to serve as your Board this year, and my delight in working with them has only just begun. If what you need is connection, then come closer, into the life of this congregation – we have committees that need members in order to function fully, fundraising and outreach that needs to happen in order to keep us relevant and alive; we need tech gurus to help with online worship and people who want to help in the spiritual leadership of this church by being worship associates, we need folks whose deepest desire is to make sure others are ok by sending cards, writing letters, making phone calls, dropping off packages, getting some groceries.

Connection is vital to our spiritual and emotional health as human beings, and it doesn't just happen. And we are a covenanted community, pledged to care for one another in a mutual understanding of sacred responsibility. I, personally, am looking forward to a year of deepening relationships and building ever more connections between myself and all members of this church family. I'm hoping I can depend on you to do the same, especially when it feels hardest, across six feet or even greater distances, behind masks and computer screens. I have spent two years assuring you that we are in this together. Friends, let's prove that to be true.

SUUC Board Update

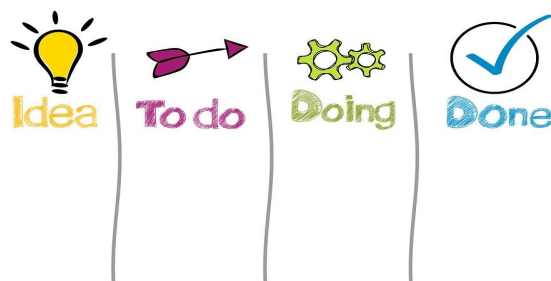
The board met via Zoom in mid August. We hoped to get our feet back under us after what has been a strange and sometimes difficult summer and we knew we needed to make a decision about services for months ahead. Amidst some technical glitches we were able to have a long check in. We talked about gardens and grandkids and changes in employment and routines and more!

Amidst other routine board discussions and organizing (budget, sign up for future meeting chairs etc.) our main objective was to have thoughtful conversation about services and to ultimately make a plan that could be enacted soon and communicated to you all clearly.

We all had thoughts. And opinions. And questions. The letter released to the congregation reflects our decision and reasons for it so eloquently than I needn't try to repeat that here. What I want to convey is the time and thought and heart put into the conversation that led to the decision. Also the awareness that the conversation is an ongoing one.

We hope to hear from you all about how you've been effected in this pandemic and the myriad ways it has shifted your life (good, hard, confusing). We hope to support the congregation in safe and meaningful ways to practice small group ministry and spiritual growth. We hope to keep asking the hard questions and taking our time with these conversations as we reevaluate, who knows how many times over who knows how long.

Personally? I miss you. I miss you all very much. Sending love and fortitude, Natasha



Dear Beloveds, as you will see in the letter below from your Board, some difficult decisions have been made. I understand the heartbreak this may cause for many of you who are yearning for deeper connection with your spiritual community. Please know that I, along with many volunteers, will be doing everything we can to provide opportunities that offer engagement and support, as well as spiritual and intellectual growth.

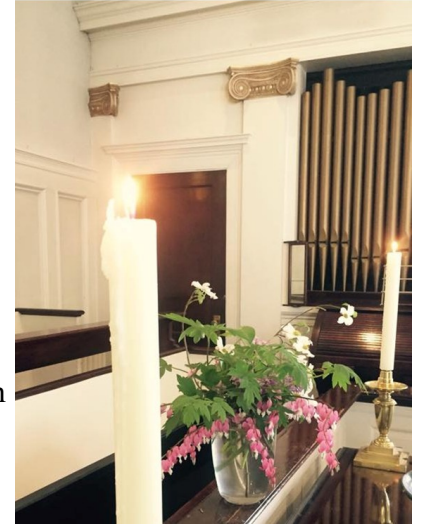
As always, I am available to you by email, phone, or video. Please reach out if you need anything or if you just want to talk. I would love to hear from you.

My friends, I look forward to seeing you all again soon. There is work to be done, in ourselves and in our world, and we will do it together, as SUUC always has and always will.

In peace,
Reverend Shay MacKay

Dear Members and Friends of SUUC,

As we look forward to beginning another year together, the world we are living in remains uncertain. We and Rev. Shay believe wholeheartedly that SUUC should be a place that offers comfort and connection during difficult times. We also, as your elected leaders, know that it is our responsibility to consider the safety and well-being of *all* our community members, staying true to both our commitment to radical hospitality and to our UU value of respect for each and every life among us. What this means is that we have found ourselves having to make difficult decisions, weighing the need to keep us all safe and healthy *physically* versus the yearning to connect with each other *spiritually* through in-person worship and gatherings.



We have looked at guidance from the UUA, , listened to what the medical experts are saying, trusted the science, and asked challenging questions – and have come to the conclusion that it is safest for all who are a part of this congregation for the building itself to remain closed and for worship to continue on Zoom for the Fall.

While this is disappointing, we are working with Rev. Shay and others to develop ways for us to engage and connect more meaningfully and deeply. This may include small group ministries on porches and patios, phone trees, letter-writing campaigns, and more familiar-feeling worship aspects as part of our online worship experiences.

And, we as your Board, along with Rev. Shay, promise to renew our commitment to considering all members, all options, all possibilities. We will continue to monitor the development and containment of the Covid-19 virus, as well as learning what we can from what other churches and faith communities are doing. As November and December arrive, we will re-evaluate and make decisions about the rest of the church year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact any one of us. We look forward to seeing you all again soon, as we begin a new church year.

In love,
Natasha Nolan, Janie Waterhouse, Marcel Gagnon, Karen Nelson, Diane Whiteside-Peck, Judi Reis and Ginny Howe.

WORSHIP THIS FALL – Sundays at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom

As you will have read in the letter from your Board of Trustees, we will continue having our Sunday services on Zoom in order to keep our community safe during this pandemic. The Zoom information will remain the same from week-to-week, so you can save it somewhere and reuse it. We'll also send it out prior to each service as a reminder.

Our September theme is **CONNECTION**

September 13th – All Rivers Run to the Sea: Gathering of the Waters

A very special outdoor service, bringing us back together as a community to begin another church year together.

September 20th – You Contain Multitudes – “The whole is contained in the part, even as the part is contained in the whole.” ~ David Spangler

September 27th – The Butterfly Effect: Exploring Our 7th Principle – “Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part.”

GATHERING OF THE WATERS 2020

September 13th at Kael and Natasha's house at 12:00 p.m.

(please contact Kael or Natasha or the office if you need the address)

We will be having a very special outdoor service to bring us back together as a community, beginning another church year together, a time to look into each other's eyes and feel the energy of our bodies in one place together, something we have all been missing during this time of social distancing and isolation.

The service will last 45 minutes and there will not be coffee hour. There will be no bathrooms available, so plan accordingly with your morning coffee!

In order to make this as safe as possible for everyone, the following guidelines will be required:

- Bring your own chair
- Wear a mask at all times
- Maintain 6ft of social distancing at all times

Even though we will not be able to sing together or give much-beloved hugs, we will *be together* in sacred space to join our spirits in love.

And don't forget to bring some water! From places that are important to you, from places you have been, from places that symbolize love and connection.





Relief Committee Update

Hello, fellow members and friends of the church! The SUUC Covid Relief Fund team has already funded York County Community Action, Southern Maine Agency on Aging's local Meals on Wheels program, Maine Access Points, and purchased fifty meals from One Love Restaurant.

In August, we acted to further convey our mission by contacting the Sanford YMCA and Trafton Center, the Superintendent of Schools, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, Strategies for a Stronger Sanford, local clergy, Waban, the Stuff the Bus program, and Sanford Housing Authority. Applications and a cover letter were sent, or a contact person was notified by phone. We also reached out to the Chamber of Commerce to help determine which local restaurants were most impacted by the Covid-19 Stay-At-Home orders. We plan to purchase meals from these restaurants and distribute them at places like Waban, Trafton, and the East Side Youth Center, or perhaps through the Backpack Program.

In addition, we learned that the City of Sanford's General Assistance program will undoubtedly see an increase in requests this Fall, for which we are eager to provide help. Our funds can also help pay Utility bills if needed. Please contact Pat, Lee, Lindsay, or Diane with your suggestions of groups or individuals who might need some financial assistance; we stand ready to help! Thanks, and stay well.

Submitted by Diane Whiteside-Peck

Dear Friends at SUUC,

I read your SUUC Homesteaders Messages several times - and will do so again. The photos are beautiful, the words are thoughtful and thought provoking and the care behind both are palpable. I know everything I saw involved a fair amount of work and I am so grateful to you for sharing. Thank you.

Jane Perkins, UUCSB

Church Directory

New directories will be available the third week of September. There is still time to send your updated contact information to the church office. Hard copies will be available in the parlor if someone drops by the church. As our email blasts go out to people outside of our congregation, if you would like a copy, please email the office and a PDF copy will be emailed to you. Thank you.

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Our Sister Church - Visit our sister church's website at <http://www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com/>
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Corner Cupboard

The Corner Cupboard continues to distribute items despite not being able to open on our usual days. We will distribute one last time next week at the Sanford Backpack Food Distribution site. We have been able to order some items online (thank you Bill for picking them up) and Marcel has worked with one Dollar Tree employee to obtain more items in large quantities. We welcomed two new members to the Advisory Team, Joy Teixeira and Janie Waterhouse. If anyone in the congregation knows of ways that the Corner Cupboard may be of service to those in need, please let me know. Judi

REV. SHAY'S FALL SCHEDULE

- Mondays – Writing Day, limited availability
- Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays – completely available to you – please email, text, or call to set an appointment time!
- Fridays – Day Off, emergency availability only
- Saturdays – On Call for pre-scheduled meetings and events, available for emergencies
- Sundays – Worship and Coffee Hour

**I will be away on Study Leave October 16th to the 24th.

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

Black Lives Matter Vigil

A vigil will be held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from noon to 1:00PM at Central Park in Sanford. There is free parking in the parking lot beside the Back Street Grill across the street from the park. Please bring your own sign and water bottle, wear a mask and stay 6+ feet away from the other participants. You can bring your own folding chair if it is too much for you to stand for an hour. This recurring action has been organized by a few concerned Shapleigh residents and they would love some added support.





OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION **All Begin the Week of September 7th**

Virtual Brown Bag Suppers with Rev. Shay – Every Wednesday from 5pm to 6pm on Zoom. Bring your dinner and spend some informal time conversing and connecting with Rev. Shay and others from our community.

Weekly Vespers Services – Every Thursday from 7pm to 7:30pm on Zoom. Join Rev. Shay for a time of reflection and stillness, music and poetry, meditation and connection.

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

The Soul of Aging with Rev. Shay – Every Tuesday from 10am to 12pm on Zoom - In this program, we will creatively approach “the art” of aging intentionally, and the many soulful invitations our maturing years offer us. In a time when so many of us are entering the last season of our lives, this is for those who yearn to understand, surrender to, and be transformed by the aging process. The themes address many of the spiritual aspect of this season of our lives and include: our visions of aging, living our un-lived lives, completion & forgiveness, our relationship with time, how to nurture our mystical nature, and the notion of befriending our own deaths. We will use poetry, story, music and art to explore these topics, all within the fellowship of a trustworthy community.



CLYNK Bottle and Can Return at Hannaford

Money generated through this program is picked up throughout the year and goes into our fundraising line. Please pick up a CLYNK bag at the church for your returnable cans and bottles, the bags are located on a table in Goodall Hall for your convenience. **In light of the pandemic you may contact the church office and have CLYNK bags mailed to you if you prefer.** Please save only the cans and bottles that are redeemable. You may drop your CLYNK bag off at any Hannaford offering this incentive or at the church. Thank you to everyone for your participation in this recycling program, we can all make a difference!



Reflections on Staying Home During the Pandemic

The pandemic has made me:

- appreciate being outdoors, especially in my garden and with friends
 - yearn for hugs
 - be thankful I live in the country, and in Maine
 - realize how fortunate I am, and encourage myself to keep a pulse on those who are most affected
- Judi Reis



“Everything is the same yet nothing is the same these days. We work, we play, we eat, we sleep, we venture out, we meet up with friends, we even eat in restaurants, again!

But nothing is the same. There is a veil of hesitancy, of wariness clouding each day. We must be vigilant and observant, at all times, unsure of what may be suspect or consequential to our health. We must be protective of those we love to ensure they remain safe. We must endure those who “have had enough of this” and flaunt their disregard for common sense and science.

And so it is that, more than ever, meditation, words of inspiration, and music can help soothe this state of anxious concern. Especially helpful these days – a TED talk shared by Janie named “Nature. Beauty. Gratitude” which has become a morning ritual, a sitting meditation at the computer, as well as a “You Tube” segment called “Brotherhood, Sisterhood”, a compilation of words by luminaries and accomplished writers to the sound of Bach recently shared by another friend. And such is life in the time of COVID-19!” Marcel



So, I know you are all anxious to know how I’ve been spending my 160 days of Covid 19 isolation (as of August 24, 2020).

1. I have been really missing my connection with all of you. I yearn for your smiles, your words, your wonderful ways of being in the world. Most of all, I miss your hugs. Somehow virtual hugs, although meaningful, hip bumps or butt bumps are not quite the same!!
2. There have been sweet moments social distancing outside connecting with friends.
3. I’ve masked up and gone to stores when necessary or just when it is necessary to get out.
4. I’ve done quite a bit of sitting, watching TV or Netflix and/or Prime movies. The news is depressing on so many fronts. And with Covid lurking around every corner, I am so glad I moved from Massachusetts to Maine 40 years ago.
5. I’ve done work on the outside on the house and in the yard and inside the house.
6. I’ve read books, newspapers etc; done crossword puzzles, words with friends etc. etc.
7. I’ve found it difficult to motivate myself to my practices of physical exercise. My motivation has definitely decreased and I feel soooo out of shape.
8. I have periods of wallowing in sadness about the epidemic and the state of the world and especially our country.
9. I have periods of great joy, when I think of all of you and I think, basically, we are all healthy and smiling most of the time.
10. I am so very thankful for the relative sanctity and sanity of living in Shapleigh with Judi and our lovable 16 year old blind and deaf and with a touch of dementia mini Yorkie named Bella.

Blessed Be, Bev Brent

Board 2020-2021

Vice President: Karen Nelson - June 30, 2021

Clerk: Judi Reis - June 30, 2022

Financial Secretary: Ginny Howe - June 30, 2022

Treasurer: Marcel Gagnon - June 30, 2021

Liaisons: Janie Waterhouse - June 30, 2023, Natasha Nolan Parker - June 30, 2022, Diane Whiteside-Peck - June 30, 2021

DREs: Ryan and Mesha Quinn

Church Leadership 2020-2021

Building and Grounds: Marcel Gagnon

Capital Projects Building Committee: Howard Dupee, Bill Ouellette

Choir:

Church Historian: Helen Kane

Corner Cupboard: Peg Sawyer, Judi Reis, Dee Ames, Helen Kane, Marcel Gagnon

Covenant of Right Relations Team: Aileen Fortune, Melody Wood, Lee Burnett, Karen Nelson, Rev. Shay

FiAT (Faith in Action Team): Patty Kidder

Finance Committee: Peg Sawyer, Pat Herrick, Ginny Howe, Deb Folsom

Fundraising Coordinator: Jan Sacco

Homesteaders: Jan Sacco, Melody Wood

Investment Management Committee: Peg Sawyer, Art Dumas, Howard Dupee

Members and Friends: Tonia Chase

Ministerial Relations Team: Tom Huber, Dee Ames, Bev Brent

Music Committee Chair: Melody Wood

Nominating Committee: Deb Folsom

Stewardship:

Women's Alliance: Nancy Farnham

Worship: Rev. Shay MacKay

Worship Associates: Rev. Shay MacKay, Patty Kidder, Mesha Quinn, Tom Huber, Beverly Brent, Jan Sacco, Janie Waterhouse and Georgia Renfroe.

Minister - Please see page 7 in this month's newsletter for Rev. Shay's Fall schedule.

Administrative Office Hours - Church office is closed due to pandemic, working from home - info@sanforduuchurch.org

Co-Directors of Religious Education - Mesha and Ryan Quinn - dre@sanforduuchurch.org

SUUC Events and Meetings

Newsletter Deadlines for 2020-2021 FY

September 21st

October 26th

November 23rd

December 28th

January 25th

February 22nd

March 22nd

April 26th

May 24th

June 21st

**The church is closed to
all activities, events,
meetings, etc. until
further notice.**



JUST WEAR IT!