

# The Messenger

April 2021 Volume 29 Issue 4



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Sunday Services are virtual for the time being. A link to each new service and an invitation to the "Zoom Coffee Hour" will be sent out by Saturday @noon.

## APRIL 2021 WORSHIP CALENDAR:

[Our Soul Matters theme for April is "BECOMING." Ask yourself: What are we becoming: as individuals, as people of principle and conscience and as a congregation? Has our experience of COVID-19 changed us, and if so, how so? What would KUUC become if worries about money were no object? How do you think that our history as a congregation in Cheshire County and as part of an international religious organization relate to our present and shape our future?]

**April 4<sup>th</sup>:** "Come As You Are!" (Rev. Michael)

Easter comes once again to KUUC, yet our service will (once again) be virtual. Last year we dressed up a little, shall we do that again, wearing bonnets and ties? Or should we just wear our jammies? Easter will meet us just as we are and we will be ready however it comes, together, just as we wish to be.

**April 11<sup>th</sup>:** "Poetry is Where We Are" (Rev. Michael)

Poet Laureate Joy Harjo has consulted with the Library of Congress to create "Living Nations, Living Words: A Map of First Peoples Poetry" in which 47 First Nation poets from across the country share their poetry. Today we will talk a little about that effort, but also share our favorite words about the land we inhabit here in the Monadnock region, land that once belonged to native people.

**April 18<sup>th</sup>:** "Unbecoming Whiteness" (Rev. Michael)

It been a long time coming, but a change needs to come in our hearts, homes, streets and cities, in the whole system of white supremacy that has made race the primary driver of economic injustice and racial strife in America. The time has come for a reckoning with this evil, and we will be part of it whether we volunteer for it or not. The soul of this country and future of our democracy hangs in the balance.

**April 25<sup>th</sup>:** "Pathways to Healing & Regeneration" (UU Ministry for Earth)

When you imagine pathways to personal, social and ecological healing and regeneration what do you see? Who is with you on your journey? What transform us and gives way to new beginnings? Who and/or what are you accountable to along the way? Join UU Ministry for Earth and the Reverend Yadene Hailu for a special Earth Sunday worship service exploring these questions in a collective journey on pathways to healing and regeneration.

## 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

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

- 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: April 2021

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“Spring is made of solid, fourteen-karat gratitude, the reward for the long wait. Every religious tradition from the northern hemisphere honors some form of April hallelujah, for this is the season of exquisite redemption, a slam-bang return to joy after a season of cold second thoughts.”

— Barbara Kingsolver, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life

Good People,

**Spring is here**, and though we still need to be careful in our movements, and follow the guidelines about how we approach the pandemic—even after vaccination—we are most certainly not in a holding pattern. People are charged up by our Zoom services, though we all wish we could be together in person. I am told the Stewardship Campaign is going well though quite a few folks haven’t yet made their pledge, which is no different from other years. Work is going on at the church, and the Board of Trustees and I is fully invested in making sure that we thrive even in difficult times, and that we arise from this long interlude with a more holistic view of our congregation. Our building is gorgeous, and needs attention, but we are not a museum; our finances need oversight and management but we are not a business, our bottom line is our congregational values and mission; we are community of caring and concern, but we are not a just another social club. We employ people, we have tenants and we have space to rent and property to care for—but in the end, we are a spiritual community and our primary purpose is to embody our principles and spread the good news about our kind-hearted, justice-loving and free faith. We are not waiting idly by, but moving on.

**As we make the turn to April**, to Easter, and fully embrace the spring season, I think it is important that we do so as Barbara Kingsolver suggests in the quote above, with an eye toward redemption and our own form of hallelujah. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the root words for hallelujah, come from Hebrew. *Hallel* means “to praise, or sing praise,” *Yah* is in a manner of speaking a nickname for *Yahweh* or *YHWH*, which is one formulation of God. Redemption comes from Latin roots that mean “to buy back, or redeem.” In most contexts it means deliverance from sin.

So, how might Unitarian Universalists in southwest New Hampshire find our own “exquisite redemption,” and sing our “April hallelujahs” alongside/with our Christian neighbors on Easter week? How may we feel that same “slam-bang return to joy” after so long awaiting the return to whatever “normal” is or was? How do we sing our praises, shout them out alongside our Jewish neighbors during their Passover, when many among us have no comparable conception of a God

that exists and rules and delivers us in the dramatic way that YHWH delivered the children of Israel from slavery under the Egyptian pharaoh in days of old?

**One way that we might sing our authentic praises** as individuals and a community, is to think about and discuss what it is we do believe to be the source of our lives, being and/or the underlying force/power that grounds and inspires us even as we are challenged by the complexities of living and struggle to find meaning.

Is it necessary to praise “Jah” the “I am who I am,” of the Hebrew bible to join the interdenominational Hallelujah chorus? No, but it is our mission, “should we accept it” to continue to find what is praiseworthy and to amplify its importance in our lives. Do we need redemption in our lives? Yes, I think so. As with many of you, I don’t believe that we are born into sin. However, I do believe that in the long course of our lives, there are things we say and do--for which I use the word sin, though you could conceive of other words for the same idea--that separate us from ourselves, from those we love and from our neighbors. I do believe that for many reasons we *lack* clarity, *choose* poorly, *behave* badly and/or *follow* false gods such as violence, greed, vanity, hatred, lust and lies. This leads us to a woeful ignorance, unhappiness and estrangement; it keeps us from being liberated from sin, fully alive, and at peace with our neighbors.

May we take this time of spring’s awakening, to also awaken from our worries and “cold second thoughts.” May we do the work of finding and connecting to, our own sense of source. May we acknowledge our interdependence and deliver ourselves and each other from any sense of alienation and sin. May we sing out our own hallelujahs and run headlong into the embrace of joy. SLAM-BANG!!

*Rev. Michael*

### **Rev. Michael's Schedule & Office Hours for February:**

**OFF DAYS:** Saturdays & April Vacation (April 26-April 30)

**STUDY & PLANNING DAY:** Thursdays      **WRITING DAY:** Fridays

**OFFICE HOURS:** I am one of those people who continue to be careful when out and about, wear their mask even though now I have had both vaccination shots. Consequently, I will continue to not have any dedicated Office Hours. However, I will at the church regularly to study, look to administrative tasks and lead worship services. I am available to meet with/call/or schedule in - person or Zoom meets with folks by appointment. To set a day and time, contact me by telephone (508)821-6092 or email [rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com](mailto:rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com). Meeting in-person will require an observance of safe practices, including mask-wearing and social distancing.

As I write, Spring is springing with rain and wind. The snow is disappearing but Summer still seems a distant hope.

A greater source of optimism comes from getting our second vaccinations, which we have weathered with few complications. A couple of weeks to let it gestate in our immune systems and we may be able to slide a few steps back into the company of other human beings, though spiking statistics still give us pause.

Your Board will be discussing re-opening the church for gatherings. There are many issues to deal with and nothing can be promised yet. For now, we are still restricted to ad hoc proposals for small groups. Outbreaks across the country are being blamed on premature openings and the understandable desire for “normal” living. Patience and caution remain our best approach.

Please stay healthy. Stay in touch with us, and with each other!

Jim Peale

## RENEWS

The Soul Matters theme for April is *Becoming*.

We are all changing, all the time, becoming something new or different, becoming more or less of something we already are, always becoming, whether intentionally or not.

This month, as signs of the winter becoming spring grow more and more obvious, look for signs of becoming in your community. You might like to take a treasure hunt walk, or look through your window, or a treasure hunt through your memories, for examples of becoming. Here is a list of ideas to get you started:

1. An empty lot or abandoned building becoming something new
2. A community center, an RV or large truck, a parking lot, or other space that has become a Covid vaccination space
3. A piece of land becoming a garden
4. A favorite view changing, because of a tree growing tall (or coming down in a storm), a new building going up, etc.

5. A piece of nature transforming into something new, like a tree growing leaves or a sprout pushing through the ground.
6. A puppy or kitten becoming a dog or cat (pets have a tween phase, too!)
7. A small weather event becoming a big one (depending on where you live, this might be a thunderstorm, snowstorm, drought, and so on)
8. Someone growing a mustache or a beard, or a baby tooth coming out or a new one growing in
9. Someone learning to ride a bike, either by seeing them learn with help or by noticing them riding with training wheels

I'd love to hear what you find, from this list or others you think of. I'll be at the RE Family Check-in on Google Meet, April 8 and April 22, 6:30pm. I hope to see you there.

Jill

## Music Message for April

The weather has been gorgeous and Spring is certainly in the air! It's wonderful to be able to take warm sunny walks and play outdoor pickleball again.

The Soul Matters theme this month is "Becoming". I attend a monthly zoom meeting with other UU music directors from across the country within the Soul Matters circle. We share our ideas about music for each themed month. We discussed the music for April and I've been listening to these pieces that were recommended. I will include some of these drop-in videos this month during the service. These are very talented folks writing UU pieces which I'd love to share with you.

Peace,

Donna

## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS, MEETINGS, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, ETC

**VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION IS THE COFFEE HOUR THEME ON APRIL 11<sup>TH</sup>.**

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The Membership Committee will host our virtual Zoom Coffee Hour for Sunday with a theme in mind: to honor all of our volunteers who have worked so hard during COVID-19, as they did before the pandemic it hit us. It is entirely appropriate that the volunteers of the Membership

Committee chose a date for this event that it happens right after the service, and just before the “Work Bee” a volunteer opportunity for us to do some yard work.

## **WORK BEE Outdoor Work Event, Sunday April 11th**

We are scheduling a Work Bee to take place Sunday afternoon April 11 for 2 hours beginning at noon.

We hope to get the outside areas of the property cleaned up from winter. We will rake leaves out of garden beds and window wells, remove dead plant material, and do some pruning of shrubs and trees.

Bring gloves, rakes, tarps, weeding tools and a desire to make our property spring beautiful.

Carol Hill will guide us toward the garden greatest in need of care.

We would like this to become a monthly event. The Sunday schedule is an experiment and subject to future change.

Carl Jacobs

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS:**

### **COVENANT GROUP DUO SECOND SESSION “Interconnection”**

**Here is the Covenant Duo session for April.** The subject this month is “Interconnection.” We are continuing to include the session for each new month in the *Messenger* for those people who weren’t able to join us in the Covenant Duo program this spring, but would still like to follow along. **Or**, use the session as a way to shape your personal contemplative time. Enjoy!

#### **Session #14: INTERCONNECTION**

#### **Lighting the Chalice**

#### **Opening Words**

“We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results.”

~ Herman Melville

**Check-In**

**P. 7**



What do you bring to our gathering today that might enhance or challenge your ability to participate fully? (How goes it with thy spirit?)

### Reading

“A human being is a part of the whole, called by us, "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest ~ a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”

~ Albert Einstein

“The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.”

~Frederick Buechner

### Questions for Reflection

What activities or situations make you feel most connected to the wide Universe?

Is it easier for you to feel interconnectedness with nature than with other people, or do you feel that same sense with both? Why or why not?

When you think about the interconnectedness of all things how do you feel? Overwhelmed? Overjoyed? Lonely? Integrated? Something else?

Does the internet (if you use the internet) help you to feel more connected to others or less connected? Why?

How can you foster a sense of interconnectedness with others who have opposing political or religious beliefs or viewpoints?

### Silence

**Sharing:** Discuss the questions for reflection

### Check Out

In a sentence or two, share your impressions of this gathering.



As we leave this circle, may we carry one another in our hearts. And may the fellowship that we have shared expand our empathy, strengthen our resolve, and carry us forward into tomorrow. (Adapted from Calvin Dame)



## THE MIDDLE EAST STUDY GROUP STILL WANTS YOU

The Middle East Study Group (MESG) welcomes new members. Our group focuses on the Middle East but particularly on Palestine, one of the most contentious issues of World politics. We stay in touch with UJME (UUs for Justice in the Middle East), which has members from all over the country, and which often has meaningful resolutions adopted by the GA. We usually have an event (sometimes two) of some kind each year which focuses on Palestine or the Middle East. For questions or more information contact Jim Smart 352 0438 or Jim Butterfield 903 0000.

## "THE WEEKLY CHAT" WITH REV. MICHAEL

(TUESDAYS NOON-1 PM)

It seems the new weekly "The Chat" on Zoom has become a success, though we are hoping to attract more people. We meet on Tuesday afternoons from Noon-1PM. Each week the show has a different theme, but sometimes we get carried away elsewhere as conversations among friends sometimes do.

"The Chat" is also an opportunity to hear about and discuss what is going on at the church. It's a forum to share your ideas for new programs, to discuss what is going on in your lives with each other, and arrange private or in-person meets with Rev. Michael if they are needed. The goal is to make all of us feel more connected, heard and well informed. Here is the link, which will work on any Tuesday you decide to join "The Chat"

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505220221>

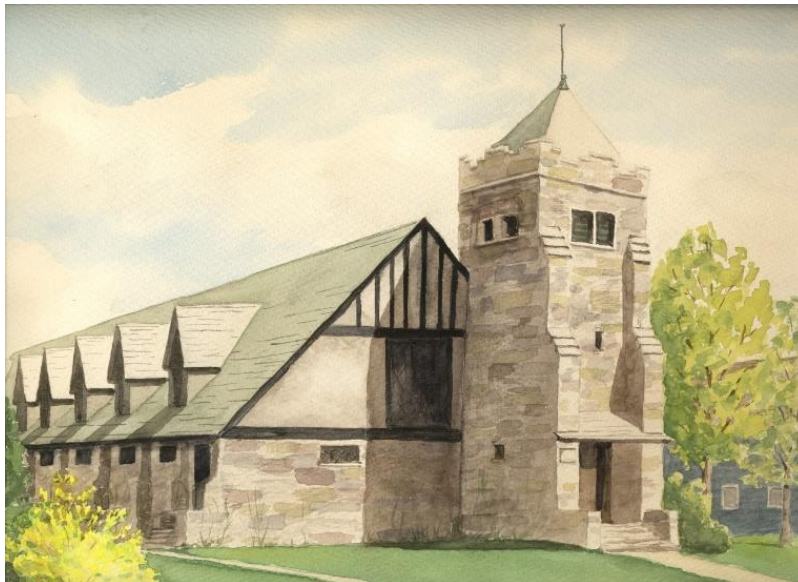
P:10

## LIBERAL CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES FELLOWSHIP GROUP

First Tuesday of the Month @ 5:00 PM.

Our fellowship group is planning to meet via Zoom (until further notice) the first Tuesday of every month from 5:00 – 6:30. We usually have a topic we focus on each month. 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](mailto:cstamatakis@outlook.com).



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### NEXT MESSENGER DEADLINE NOTICE

The deadline for the May *Messenger* is 5 P.M. on Friday April 23<sup>rd</sup> and this month it is a hard **deadline**. The due date for *Messenger* submissions will be on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month prior to their issue (the only exceptions will be for the January issue--deadline December 15<sup>th</sup>--and the fact that there is no July *Messenger*). Send all your articles and notices to Rev. Michael at [rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com](mailto:rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com).

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS:

<b>Circle of Caring:</b>	Betsy Zimmerli & Betty Forrest
<b>Covenant Groups:</b>	Carolyn Antrim
<b>Investment:</b>	John Bordenet
<b>Middle East Study Group:</b>	Jim Smart
<b>Membership:</b>	Deb McLay
<b>Music:</b>	Carin Torp
<b>Personnel:</b>	Ruth Shepard
<b>Religious Exploration:</b>	Barbara Bryce
<b>Senior Lunch Bunch:</b>	Betty Forrest
<b>Shawls of Love:</b>	Darcy Doyle
<b>Slice of Fellowship:</b>	Betty Forrest
<b>Social Action/Green Sanctuary:</b>	Open
<b>Stewardship:</b>	Carol Stamatakis
<b>Ushers:</b>	Tom Haynes
<b>Wayside Pulpit:</b>	Vicki Keller
<b>Worship:</b>	Susie Ericson-West & Gwyn Powers
<b>Property:</b>	Carl Jacobs
<b>Fundraising:</b>	Open
<b>Greens Sale:</b>	Open
<b>Welcoming Congregation:</b>	Open



## KUUC CONTACT LIST 2020-2021

### WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday Services: 10:00 A.M.

Religious Exploration: 10:00 A.M.

September-June

Summer Services 10:00 A.M.

Address: 69 Washington Street  
Keene, NH 03431

Phone: (603) 352-1719

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Website: [www.kuuc.org](http://www.kuuc.org)

Facebook: [Keene Unitarian Universalist  
Church@KeeneUU](https://www.facebook.com/KeeneUnitarianUniversalistChurch@KeeneUU)

### STAFF

Minister: Rev. Michael Hall

[rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com](mailto:rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com)

(508) 821-6092

Director, Religious Exploration: Jill M. Hall

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

Music Director: Donna Dearth

[rdearth@hotmail.com](mailto:rdearth@hotmail.com)

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2020-2021

Jim Peale, President-Elect 357-7875  
[pealefamily@gmail.com](mailto:pealefamily@gmail.com)

John Walter, Treasurer/Past President 358-3101  
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Carl Jacobs, President-Elect 831-1409  
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