

The Messenger

FEBRUARY 2021 Volume 29 Issue 2



Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, 69 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 <http://www.kuuc.org/> office@kuuc.org 603-352-1719

Contents

- 1 Worship Calendar
- 2 KUUC Mission & UU Beliefs
- 3-5 Sharing Ministry & Ministers Schedule
- 5-6 President's Message
- 6 Religious Exploration
- 7 Music Notes
- 7 UUA News
- 8-9 About Zoom
- 10-12 Events & Updates etc.
- 13-14 General Info, KUUC Contacts, etc.

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.

FEBRUARY 2021 WORSHIP CALENDAR:

[Our Soul Matters theme for February is "BELOVED COMMUNITY." Ask yourself: What are we doing to build the "Beloved Community" within our membership, among our friends, in households and beyond our walls? Ask ordinary and special things can I do to help create and support the Beloved Community here and now? What is the relationship between the idea of beloved community and "the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all," that is our 6th Unitarian Universalist Principle?]

February 7th: "More Religion and Less Church" (Rev. Michael F. Hall)

Not a phrase you would expect coming from a minister's mouth? In fact, they were first uttered by a remarkable Unitarian laywoman at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Rev. Michael will reflect on this multi-talented woman from days gone by and the living truth of her words for people today.

February 14th: "What's Love Got to Do with It?" (Rev. D'Vorah Kelley)

Valentine's Day is usually about romantic love, candy and flowers and mushy cards. But what happens when you dare to love, to take the risk to love, and your heart is broken? Rev. D'Vorah will share stories of three ordinary people- a wife, a daughter, and a mother which will seek to answer the question "what's love got to do with it?" The service will also include a theme-based Time for All Ages.

February 21st: "Side with Love Sunday" (UUA Worship Web)

What if to "side with love" meant making bold, faith-full choices? What if it were even a little bit scary? This worship service brings together worship leaders and musicians from across the country to offer hopeful, moving, challenging reminders about what we, as Unitarian Universalists, are called to do, and BE, in the world.

February 28th: "Being the Beloved Community" (Rev. Michael)

How we got to this time of pandemic and deep divisions in our society is one thing. How we get back is another. However, the most important question for today is: how can we build that long hoped for "beloved community," that Dr. King talked about? As a liberal faith tradition based on human worthiness, diversity of beliefs, radical inclusion and social justice how do we embrace our mission and foster beloved community here, there and everywhere?

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: February 2021

P.3

“But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr,

“Facing the Challenge of a New Age”

Good People,

Building the Beloved Community: What a time for us to be considering together this month’s Soul Matters theme of “Beloved Community.” It is an idea often attached to the theology, justice work and ministry of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to which the vision of the Beloved Community was central. Dr. King articulated this vision of a world reborn often, and in such a beautiful, compelling and understandable ways. It truly was a vision, a great aspiration, with a realistic assessment of the world as it was, and an unshakeable belief that individual and collective change was possible. This is because MLK believed that human decency, though it may be half-hidden, over-ridden and opposed by great forces at play, was also hard-wired into all of us. Eventually, through hard work, non-violent resistance and the exposure of the evils of racism, militarism and economic injustice human decency would become stimulated, galvanized and transformative.

King wasn’t making this idea up out of whole cloth, but reaching back and building upon scripture, philosophy, theologies and religious reform movements. What he was also doing was holding beloved community out as a call to all people the world over, no matter their race, religion or country. The Kingdom of Heaven brought right down to earth.

So, what do you believe:

Is such a thing as the beloved community a means to achieving our 6th UU Principle: “the goal of world community, with peace, liberty and justice for all”?

Is it even possible to overcome “evil” (however you define that) at all?

Do you believe that human decency **is** universal and transformative? Or, do you think that the “inherent worth and dignity of every person” and our other principles are a call to collective action, justice-making and activating our own human decency?

In the spirit of transparency: You will see below that I have given you a full accounting of how I am spending my time, when I am taking time off, and on which days I am fully available to you.

Basically, I use Sunday morning for any final polishing of the service, leading worship [and hosting coffee hour]. Sunday afternoon and Monday are for planning and studying, (both general study and for upcoming worship), each of which is critical to the work I do and my effectiveness in it. I will be checking emails also, and am available for phone calls or visits but don't usually schedule Sunday or Monday visits in advance. On the second and third Mondays of the week I attend the monthly Exec. Council & Board of Trustees meetings respectively.

I tend to schedule the majority of my meetings, phone calls and visits between Tuesday-Thursday and host "The Weekly Chat" on Tuesdays from Noon-1PM (sometimes a little longer).

Friday is my "Writing Day" and usually the cue-to-cue rehearsal for, and occasional advance taping of Sunday Worship. I will sometime write or answer emails, but mostly check them once or twice, and leave the response to them for Sunday or Monday. Saturday is my usual day off, if I use it for a workshop, board retreat, the wedding or memorial service of a member, then, as I have done this week, I will try to schedule sometime during the following week

Why have decided to give you all of this information?

That's a good question. Two reasons: 1.) Recent events in our country have made me very appreciative of transparency as a way to avoid confusion. 2.) To try ensure clear communication and help all of us have appropriate expectations.

Has anyone asked for this of me?

No. Although I am called into covenant with you and have several ways that I serve you: Overseeing and Leading Worship, Prophetic Ministry, Pastoral Care, Administration, Staff Supervision, Messaging, Stewardship, Public Witness and Interfaith Cooperation among them. I think you should know that, and stay informed.

Any worries?

Only this. Considering how often, and for very good reasons, things change in ministry, the fact that I have given you a schedule that seems totally set-in stone is a concern. Because ministry doesn't work that way--and I can't always disclose why I am not where I am "supposed to be," or send out an eblast before I get where the minister is most needed. So, this is the schedule I *hope* to keep in the coming weeks and months; I will keep you posted if any long-term changes are needed.

The Numbers: Finally, I try to update the public FaceBook page of the church 4-7 days per week. Please check it out each day and if you like what is posted then "like" (the thumbs-up gesture) or "love it" (heart). If you really like it then "share it" on your own Facebook page. It may seem odd, but doing this is one of the ways we make friends and *perhaps* grow our community.

In the last 28 days (December 30-January 26) our posts have “reached” 1,552 people, with 390 “post-engagements.”

Five people have liked the page--that is they have liked Keene Unitarian Universalist Church @KeeneUU as a whole--not just a single new post of ours. When you like some individual, business or organization’s page that means you will start regularly receiving their posts without having to go looking for their page. I think this is a good and promising development and I thought you should know about it.

Yours in Faith, Hope and all-encompassing Love,

Rev. Michael

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

OFF DAYS: February 1st, 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th

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

OFFICE HOURS: As we have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases in the past few months and are struggling to get people vaccinated, in February, Rev. Michael will not be having any dedicated Office Hours. However, he will be at the church regularly to study, look to administrative tasks and rehearse and lead worship service. Rev. Michael will be available to meet with/call/or have Zoom meets with folks by appointment. To set a day and time, contact him by telephone (508)821-6092 or email rev.michaelkuuc1824@gmail.com. Meeting in-person will require a strict observance of safe practices, including mask-wearing and social distancing.

President's Message February 2021

As I write, it is sunny outside and quite cold. Tomorrow, it is predicted to be cloudy with snow starting in the afternoon. So, it seems to be with the news as every step forward seems to follow with a step back. We finally have competent people taking the reins of government but they are finding that many of the cupboards on which we relied are poorly stocked where not bare. I know many of us have rejoiced at the opportunity to register for the new COVID vaccine for which we will have to wait some weeks as the former administration made few or no efforts to maintain appropriate stockpiles of the drugs. The day when we will be able to gather in community looks further away than it did a month ago.

Nevertheless, the work of the church goes on. The Board is proceeding to have our elevator repaired. We will be deciding soon how we will fund that repair and will call on the congregation if necessary. Rev. Michael and his dedicated team continue to provide us with remote worship

and community on Sunday mornings and the audience seems to be growing. Please join us if you haven't been with us.

My home keeps its "holiday lights" on in the evenings as a symbol of our ongoing commitment to hope. Even if you've put your literal lights away for the season, perhaps you can maintain that light of hope in your hearts and minds as we anticipate better days.

Please stay in touch with us, and with each other.

Jim Peale

RENews

The Soulful Home theme for February is *Beloved Community*. Martin Luther King, Jr promoted the idea of "Beloved Community" ~ a society based on justice and equal opportunity ~ as an ideal to strive towards. The roots go back much farther, and, as a quick look for information to share with you shows, are much debated.

Rather than go down that rabbit hole, though, I'd like to remind you that Soulful Home resources will be emailed to those on the RE list (if you want to be added, just let me know) by February 1. A packet of selected resources, things I find interesting, or just friendly mail, will be sent out during the month. Reminders of events and other ways to keep in touch will be posted to the RE Facebook message thread (again, let me know to add you if you wish).

In addition, I'd like to encourage you to check out Side With Love's [Thirty Days of Love 2021](#). They have organized activities to view, read, and do for kids, youth, and family/multigen audiences.

The RE Committee meets on Sunday, February 14 at 4pm. All are welcome; again, let me know if you'd like a link.

Other events this month will be fluid. January proved to be eventful in unexpected ways, and the previously established schedule rightly bowed to emergent needs. This month we will have Family check-ins available on Thursday evenings, and we'll try again for a Neighboring Faiths meeting. And of course, we'll have weekly Zoom worship and coffee hour. I hope to "see" you often.

Jill

The Music Message for February: “Beloved Community”

I just took a beautiful winter walk with my friend on the golf course behind my house. It is always a spiritual experience with her when we look at the beauty nature offers. There are so many things to notice when you’re observing with openness. This openness is essential to my relationships in my community, to carry this feeling I have walking, into all areas of my life. Then I can see the inner beauty of others.

This month’s theme is “Beloved Community” which to me has a lot to do with acceptance.

We will be starting bell choir rehearsals this month and we are looking for people to join us.

There are so many musicians in our UUC community and this is a wonderful way to make music in a safe way. Please email me, rdearth@hotmail.com if you have any interest in ringing!

Peace,

Donna

Big News: Updating the Principles and Purposes of our UUA

By Mary Heafy

Many UUs and visitors look in the front of our hymnbook to find the listing of our sources, principles, and purposes. Our children and youth study them in Religious Exploration classes. They are referenced in worship.

My guess is that few of us know that they are Article II, Section C-2.1 Principles and Section C-2.2 Purposes of the UUA Bylaws. They were written as part of the 1961 merger of Universalists and Unitarians with a major rewrite adopted in 1984 with little change since then. Because ours is a Living Tradition, we are called to revisit our Principles and Purposes to assure they remain relevant, to see what is missing, what is no longer important, and whether the language communicates our core values to the current times.

If you want to learn more about the work of the Article II Study Commission’s (A2SC) charge, keep up with their work, and find out how KUUC can have input into this process, check out the link:

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission>

After spending many months learning how to and then practicing using Zoom for UU worship and other programs, “how we do it” is familiar, but it doesn’t always make sense. Here I’m going to explain why we do certain things with Zoom worship or meetings. If you have other questions, I’ll be happy to keep trying to find answers.

What’s with the Waiting Room? The “waiting room” is one of Zoom’s built-in security features. Sadly, a number of worship events (not only UU ones) have experienced a violation called “zoom-bombing.” Zoom-bombing is when people enter a Zoom meeting or worship intending to disrupt it. Disruptions have included displaying offensive, violent, or pornographic videos or images, or shouting offensive slogans. The waiting room function allows those managing the meeting or worship (your Zoom “techs”) to recognize people who want to come in, and let them in. There are other security features that can be used if a Zoom-bomber gets in despite the waiting room.

Some churches post their worship links on their website. Why do I have to request to be on an email list to get the link? This is a choice KUUC has made to help secure our worship against Zoom-bombing. People who ask to be put on a list are vetted by Rev. Michael. If we posted a link the Zoom techs would have to do that vetting on the spot at each worship, which is a lot trickier to do under time pressure.

Why do I have to ask Rev. Michael to book a meeting for my group? Anyone can get a free Zoom account by registering on the Zoom website and downloading the software to your device. A free account limits the length of time you can meet to 40 minutes. If you want a quick chat with a few friends this might be the way to go. But if you don’t want to have to log out and restart your meeting after 40 minutes, you might want a paid account. KUUC has one paid account. Some churches and ministers got one of a limited number of lower-price or free accounts through the UUA or the UUMA (UU Ministers’ Association) but those accounts not only went quickly but have more operating glitches, because the “owner” is the association, not the individual. I’m glad we don’t have one of those, after seeing some of the hiccups others are dealing with.

Rev. Michael’s one account can host a longer meeting but still only *one meeting* at a time. Which means the RE committee can’t meet during the Book Group’s meeting time, for instance.

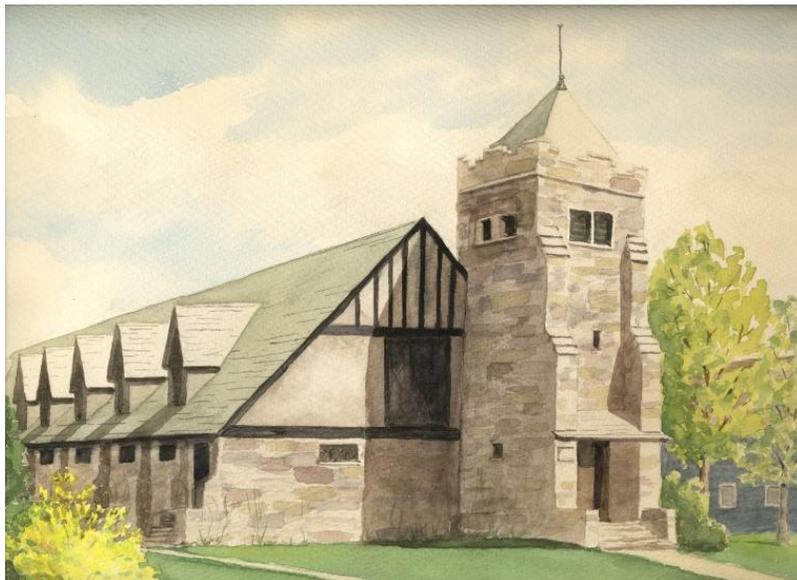
Why am I muted? One of the features of Zoom is that when someone speaks, the program automatically “spotlights” or shows their video to other participants. It’s useful in meetings, I suppose, in that if you have something to say your colleagues don’t have to go searching all the little pictures for who is talking. But in worship, if someone’s microphone is on and they say something (or the dog barks, or the sirens go by the window) while Donna is playing, or while

someone is reading the chalice lighting, then their screen replaces the screen with the musicians or the chalice. Plus, the noise is distracting. The meeting host and co-hosts (your Zoom techs) can mute participants, and can *ask* participants to unmute, but each participant must *choose* to unmute themselves. (A different security feature of the Zoom program, which protects individual privacy, but sometimes makes it fussy for sharing, if you can't find the button when you want it.)

One last thing. Zoom releases updates often. They seem to drop them on Sunday mornings (ugh! Useful time for their business clients but lousy for the congregations who rely on it!). Eventually, the Zoom you have on your device will prompt you to update it, but you can choose to do it anytime by following the instructions in this link: [Update Zoom](#). If you use Zoom on a desktop or laptop computer (PC, Mac or Linux) it is "Zoom desktop client"; if you use it on a tablet or phone (iOS or Android), it is "Zoom mobile app." Updating means you have all the latest features, and they add features often.

If you're having trouble, please reach out to me or Rev. Michael, or one of the congregation's lay leaders. Several people have helped congregants set up or get more comfortable with their Zoom account. We want you to be able to access worship, coffee hour and meetings, and we'll help you get there.

Jill



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS, MEETINGS, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, ETC

SAVE THE DATE – Join us for one of these Shared Ministry Forums

Sunday, March 14th, during coffee hour via Zoom

Wednesday, March 17th, Noon via Zoom

You are invited to share your thoughts on shared ministry in a forum facilitated by the KUUC Committee of the Ministry (COM). “Shared ministry” is the effort we all make to live our faith with each other and throughout our world community.

During the 2019-2020 church year, the COM focused on updating the Committee’s purpose and hoped to provide more opportunities for all members of the congregation to share perspectives on KUUC’s shared ministry. Just when the first Ministry Forum was scheduled last year, our plan was derailed by the COVID pandemic. We are now picking up where we left off a year ago and moving forward.

As a part of our plan, the COM members will be hosting forums to hear your thoughts on shared ministry at KUUC. These forums will be facilitated events lasting about an hour and hosted on Zoom. Summary results from the forums will be shared with the Board of Trustees and the congregation.

Committee on the Ministry members are Susan Lowry (chair), Mickey Cronin, Rev. Michael Hall, Tom Julius, and Carol Stamatakis.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

COVENANT GROUP DUOS COMING SOON

Have you experienced a Covenant Group at KUUC? If you have, you can appreciate the deeper connections you have made with your small group members. If you have not, we hope to give you a sense of what goes on in a small group by matching pairs of KUUC members/friends for a monthly phone call with a topic for discussion. Topics will come from the UUA Soul Matters curriculum or may be suggested by Rev. Michael or KUUC members. Interested? Read on!

Duos will last until June, one phone call per month. Participants will receive an email with the monthly discussion topic and some quotes and/ or readings. (Those without internet will be snail mailed).

GROUND RULES for Covenant Duos

P.10

Active Listening is key. No cross talk during check-in or initial response to the topic. After both have had a chance to speak on the topic, cross talk/discussion may occur. Always speak from your own experience. Respond respectfully. Please do not attempt to 'fix' or offer advice (unless specifically requested to do so). Confidentiality is expected. There will be a 45-minute time limit. Please feel free to write up/ agree with your 'match' on elements of your own covenant and how you want to experience this time. i.e., You may want to set a time limit for initial topic discussion, etc.

Here is what you need to do: Answer the questions below. You may copy and paste your answers to the questions and email your responses to Deb McLay;

debmcclay529@gmail.com

1. Your Name
2. Gender Preference of your match?
3. Morning, Afternoon or Evening phone call? You may choose one or two
4. Day(s) of the week (more than one day will be easier to match, if possible)
5. Phone number you would like to use for this monthly call?

That's all there is to it! PLEASE NOTE! You will have ONE WEEK to respond to these questions. As soon as we (The Membership Committee) gather responses and do the matching, you will get an e-mail with your match's name and phone number, and the first topic. You may decide with your match what day to set for your call; i.e., 1st Saturday of the month, etc.

Get ready to deepen your relationship with a member/friend (and possibly yourself)!

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

Our annual stewardship campaign will begin in about a month. Although this will not be our first stewardship campaign held without us joining together in the sanctuary and parish hall, it is the first such campaign that we have time to prepare for. If you have any creative stewardship ideas, please reach out to John Walter, stewardship chairperson, at jnwalterjr@gmail.com.

Thanks!



THE MIDDLE EAST STUDY GROUP 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

(NOW ON 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.

LIBERAL CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES FELLOWSHIP GROUP

USUALLY MEETS FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 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.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NEXT MESSENGER DEADLINE NOTICE:

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

COMMITTEE CONTACTS:

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

KUUC CONTACT LIST 2020-2021

WORSHIP SERVICES

STAFF

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2020-2021

Jim Peale, President-Elect	357-7875	Eloise Clark	352-9182
	pealefamily@gmail.com		clarktreat@myfairpoint.net
John Walter, Treasurer/Past President	358-3101	Tom Haynes	357-7645
	jnwalterjr@gmail.com		piperhistoricalservices@gmail.com
Carl Jacobs, President-Elect	831-1409	Ruth Shepard	477-5694
	cjacobs@ne.rr.com		ruthshep47@gmail.com
Carol Hill, Clerk	903-4974	David Robinson	355-7812
	hcbhill@ne.rr.com		davide.1945@hotmail.com
		Lindsay Bartlett	762-1946
			actimavith@gmail.com