



Parish Messenger

Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick



December
2025



OUR MISSION

To be a spiritual community,
To welcome all,
To nurture one another,
To work for justice,
And to care for the earth.

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos
Minister

Rev. Sylvia Stocker
Minister Emerita

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Rev. Kharma Amos, Minister

Office Hours: Tues-Fri, 10-4

Minister's Message

Choosing Hope?

Friends, I'm not sure how it got to be December already! These days, something about the pace of change and the frequency of "curve balls" has made it feel to me like the world is spinning more quickly and more out of control than "normal" (whatever that is). Many of you are limiting your news intake for similar reasons, trying to find a workable balance between wanting to stay aware of what's happening; and needing to protect your heart and guard your courage from overwhelm, depression, anxiety, spiraling negativity, etc.



What does it mean, in this context, to Choose Hope? I can share that in our Worship Committee meeting in which we discussed this theme, no one neat-and-tidy answer emerged. And, that was both beautiful and real! I'm so grateful for the people on this committee who are willing, month after month, to converse deeply about both the promises and the challenges of our themes. This month, we had some deep discussions about realism vs. hope; hoping vs. wishing; and whether or not it is even responsible to choose hope these days. We noted that choosing hope makes us vulnerable to disappointment and hurt. We also noted that this is no reason not to actively, intentionally, choose hope and work towards making it real.

To get you into the reflective spirit, here are some questions to ponder:

- Where are you finding hope these days?
- What creative ways might you make a choice to nurture hope in someone else?
- What might Hope be an antidote for? Despair? Pessimism? Dread? Something else?
- What are the places inside you that most need an infusion of hope right now? What choices might you make to allow hopefulness room to emerge?

This is an extremely busy time of year for many of us, and certainly for our church community. May we all find the time and space to breathe, to nurture awareness and gratitude, and to choose moving in the direction of hope.

Blessings,
Kharma

SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Monthly Theme: Hope

Sunday, December 7th - The Gritty Side of Hope *

Led by Rev Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Choir

Hope is often talked about as something light and airy (Emily Dickinson famously called it a thing with feathers), but is hope always so tame and well-behaved? Today, we'll think about the gritty side of hope, and what it means to make a choice day after day, in situation after situation, not to give in to despair.

Sunday, December 14th - Choosing Hope Together *

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Pop-Up Choir

Hope can be hard to sustain in isolation, and can become more alive when shared, tended, and supported in community. As we hold our annual **Mitten Tree ritual**, which invites us to be in generous solidarity with others in our community, we'll consider the kind of Hope that comes alive when we choose to nurture and practice it together.

Tuesday, December 16th (7 pm) - Blue Christmas

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos and Pastoral Care Associates, Music by Louise Gephart and Jill Scherer



Blue Holidays is a gentle, contemplative service for those who are having a difficult time getting to the "joy" that is such a hallmark (pun intended) of this season. If you are carrying pain or grief during this season of celebration, if you find this to be a difficult season or a reminder of loss or challenging times, or if you are simply burdened by the weight of the world's grief, this service is for you. Hosted and led by the Pastoral Care Associates, our service will include readings, songs, a candle lighting liturgy, and opportunities for reflection on how to manage the feelings that arise during this busy and often complicated time. Music provided by Louise Gephart and Jill Sherer (harp). The service will be followed by time to share cookies, coffee, tea, and cocoa, as well as to engage in conversation with pastoral care associates and others in a relaxed fashion.

Sunday, December 21st - Light & Hope for the World *

Led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos, Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Intergenerational Orchestra

Our worship today will be full of the sounds of our **Intergenerational Orchestra**, and will draw our attention to the wisdom of Winter Solstice. What might the earth be teaching us about how we can consciously choose light and hope for ourselves and the world?



Wednesday, December 24th (5 pm) Christmas Eve - Family Service

Music by Will Bristol and friends

Join us at 5 pm for our early Christmas Eve service designed for children and families (featuring a no-rehearsal pageant).

Wednesday, December 24th (7 pm) Christmas Eve - UU Traditional Service

Music by Will Bristol and the UUCB Choir

Join us for Christmas Eve at 7 pm for our traditional service (featuring the choir). As we hear again the well-known story of the birth of Jesus -- an incarnation of divine love -- let us ponder how we can ready ourselves to receive the new incarnations of hope and love so desperately needed in our world today.

Sunday, December 28th - Goodbye, Hello

Led by our own UUCB Worship Committee, Music by Will Bristol and the Sunnysiders

Join us as the Worship Committee shares observations and "thoughts to ponder" as we move into 2026.

*** Additional service location at the Eveningstar Cinema to ease crowding in the sanctuary - see Page 7 for more information!**

Christmas Eve Poinsettia Orders

TIME TO ORDER POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

It is a UUCB tradition for members and friends to purchase poinsettia plants to grace the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve service.



Poinsettias are often given in memory of or to honor special people or life events.

These statements are printed in the Order of Service on Christmas Eve.

We will order and pick up the plants, and decorate the sanctuary. You can take your poinsettias home after the Christmas Eve service to grace your home.

Note: Please take your poinsettia with you after the Christmas Eve service, or have a friend take it for you if you won't be there. Due to the difficulty of caring for these plants, all poinsettias left in the church after the Christmas Eve service will be donated to a local health care facility.

HOW TO ORDER

Complete the order form below and submit form and payment to the Church office by **Tuesday, December 16 at 5pm**
Payment can be cash or check (payable to UUCB)

HOW TO GET FORMS AND PAYMENT TO THE OFFICE

- Mailing the order and payment to UUCB PO Box 129, Brunswick ME 04011
- Drop it by the Church Office Tuesday-Friday, 10am-4pm
- Put the order form and payment in the mail slot outside the church office.

Poinsettias Pot Size	QUANTITY/COLOR			TOTAL
	Red	White	Pink	
6 in pot (4-6 blooms) @ 12.99 each				
7.5 in pot (9-12 blooms) @ 23.99 each				

Your Name _____
(as you want it to appear in the Order Or Service)

MESSAGE for the Order Of Service::

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

What would you like to do with your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve service.

- Will take my poinsettia home after the service
- _____ will take my poinsettia home after the service
- Please donate my poinsettia to a local health care facility

A Note from the Music Director

Happy December everyone! I wish for this month to be a hopeful and peaceful time for all.



- Starting in January our congregation will begin subscribing to the UUA's new virtual hymnal *Sing Out Love*. Read more about *Sing Out Love* here in [my article](#) for last month's *Parish Messenger* and via *UUWorld* [here](#). There are many ways to interface with this hymnal including having access yourself via one your own digital devices, and that will be possible once our subscription begins. If you would like that, please just enter your email address via this [online form](#) and I will send you an access link once the time comes. If you are in the choir or pop-up choir, you will already be receiving the link since I already have your emails at hand, so no need to fill out the form.
- The Intergenerational Orchestra is scheduled to appear on December 21st this year and **it's not too late to join!** We will perform several times throughout the service, playing some original arrangements of holiday tunes as well as a few published carols. There will be two Sunday rehearsals: December 7th and December 14th. Rehearsals will be in the sanctuary, right after the service for about 45 minutes. Try to attend both rehearsals, but if you can only make one—that is OK. We will also warm up the morning of December 21st, so everyone participating should plan on arriving by 9am that morning. The Christmas carols we will play are written to be easy for most players. Those of you who have been a part of this in the past will know them. The other arranged pieces will also be a little less easy but I can write "customized" parts if needed to match a player's experience. If you did not participate last year but would like to this year, send me an email and let me know of your instrument of choice @music-director@uubrunswick.org All ages and abilities are welcome!
- Coming December 14th at 2pm: [A Seasonal Sing-Along](#)

Make your holiday themed group karaoke dreams come true! This festive, all ages event will be led by UUCB Music Director, Will Bristol in collaboration with Brunswick Pride. Healthy snacks and hot cocoa will be provided. "Ugly" x-mas sweaters are encouraged but not necessary. Please register [here](#) if you are able. For more information email music-director@uubrunswick.org



SIDE DOOR COFFEEHOUSE - DECEMBER CANCELLED – NEXT INSTALLMENT JANUARY 9TH



The Side Door Coffeehouse is a venue for local musicians and others (professional and amateur) to share their talents, and for residents and visitors of the Midcoast community to enjoy great entertainment and conversation in a relaxed setting. A fundraiser for the church, the "Side Door" is organized by UUCB's Music Director, Will Bristol, with a group of volunteers to help make the evening run smoothly. Admission is \$12 for adults and free for children 17 and under. Follow the Side Door Coffeehouse on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to help spread the word.



The Side Door Coffeehouse operates on the second Friday of every month except August. **The DECEMBER Side Door has been CANCELLED.** The next installment will be Friday, January 9th featuring Kat Logan at 8:30 pm.

Open Mic signup at 6:45; Open Mic 7:00; Kat Logan 8:30-9:30. Visit

<https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/kat-logan-at-the-side-door-coffeehouse/> to learn more about Kat and the Side Door. Hope to see you there!

From the Lifelong Spiritual Formation Director (LSFD)

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

CHALICE CIRCLES WINTER SESSION – REGISTER SOON!

Chalice Circles are small groups that meet six times per session, offering a space to make connections, learn, and grow through open-hearted listening and honest personal reflection.

Registration opens December 8th for the Winter Session (December 28-March 14). Contact Toben at lsf-director@uubrunswick.org to sign up or for more information.



Toben Cooney-Callnan

CHILDREN’S SPIRITUAL FORMATION

WINTER FUN NIGHT

SATURDAY DECEMBER 13 – 5-8 PM

UUCB – MERRYMEETING BAY ROOM

The Children's Spiritual Formation Committee invites families to take part in our fifth annual Winter Fun Night! Get your last-minute shopping done, go out to dinner, or just have some time to yourself while your kids make crafts, eat pizza, and watch a short winter themed movie. This childcare event is free and is offered to all UUCB families with children age 3 and up. There is no pre-registration required for this event. Email Toben Cooney-Callnan at lsf-director@uubrunswick.org for more information.



Church Happenings and Announcements



There's still time to help the elves!



UUCB Holiday Fair

Saturday – Dec. 6

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

UU Church of Brunswick
-Bring Cash or Check-

Handmade by uus Drop-off:
Completed crafts and donations can be dropped off at church starting Friday, December 5th from noon to 7:00 pm and Saturday, December 6th from 8:00am-9:00am.

White Elephants Room
Clean, Usable Donations Wanted
Drop offs: Tuesday, December 2, 12:00 - 4:00
Wednesday, December 3, 10:00 - 4:00
Thursday, December 4, 10:00 - 7:00
Friday, December 5, 10:00 - 12:00

Eats & Treats Needs You! Drop Off -
Eats and Treats should be dropped off Friday the 5th before 7:00 pm or on the morning of the fair between 8:00 and 9:00. Food should be labeled, with nuts, gluten free and what it is.

Wreathmaking is alive and well! Join us after the service on Sunday, November 30 to make and decorate Christmas wreaths to sell at our Holiday Fair the following Saturday. Don't know how? Come anyhow and we'll teach you! Bows and jingle bells, glass balls, and pine cones will be available to decorate the wreaths you make. Pizza will be hot, free, and ready after the workshop.

Costume jewelry donations, as well as small cardboard jewelry boxes, may be placed Sundays (all year!) in the box on the membership table, or in the May Sarton Room during Pre-Fair Week December 2-5 from 10:00-4:00.

Soup's On at the Holiday Fair!
Soups should be dropped off between 8:00 and 9:00 on Saturday, Dec. 6th right before the fair.

From the Board of Trustees



Greetings all!

For those of you I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Ann Butenhof, and I am a new member of UUCB's Board of Trustees. My husband Ken and I are relatively recent Mainers, Brunswick residents and UUCB members. After living in Manchester, NH for nearly 30 years, we moved to Maine in the Spring of 2022, and into our house in Brunswick in March 2023. While the primary reason for moving to Maine was to be closer to one of children and our two grandchildren, we love everything about living in Maine!

I was raised a Unitarian (in Oak Ridge, TN) and had been a very active member of the UU church in Manchester, NH. What immediately impressed me about UUCB, was not only the quality of Sunday sermons, music and youth programming – which are fantastic! – but the vibrancy, energy and level of engagement of the congregation! I feel so incredibly fortunate to have found this home.

Holiday Fair: If you are looking for a way to contribute your talents and strengthen your relationships with other congregants, I strongly encourage you to participate in the Holiday Fair. As explained in much more detail elsewhere, there are many ways to help out, whether in advance or on the day of the Fair. Not only would you be helping with UUCB's largest fundraising event, I feel safe in guaranteeing that you will have great fun while doing so!

Attend a Service Offsite: Over the next few weeks, please consider attending a Sunday service at the Eveningstar (perhaps while enjoying popcorn!), or the Highlands (if you happen to live there), and then please let us know about your experience as we continue investigating options for addressing our continued growth.

Leadership Retreats: In early November, a half-day retreat was held at the Allen Avenue UU Church in Portland, attended by leaders from several UU congregations in the region. UUCB was extremely well represented at the retreat -- Kharma, Toben and Will all attended, as did multiple members of the Board of Trustees and Committee on Ministry! It was a well-run, facilitated event which focused primarily on communication and conflict resolution.

The UUCB Board then held its own half-day retreat on November 15th. I have included two photos with this article – one which shows an altar holding objects we had brought from our homes to represent what UUCB means to us, and the other which reveals the “web” we created by tossing a ball of yarn around the circle when we shared one thing we appreciated about another member of the Board. We got to know each other much better through these effective team building exercises. We also spent considerable time reviewing lessons we had learned at the recent regional leadership retreat, and how we might use this information to enhance our own communication skills. I truly feel lucky and honored to be serving on this Board with so many hard working and caring individuals.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming months.

In friendship,
Ann Butenhof on behalf of the Board of Trustees



Church Happenings and Announcements

GROWTH TASK FORCE

A Reminder From the Growth Task Force

From David Kew

To ease crowding in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, we'll be streaming the service from the Eveningstar Cinema in the Tontine Mall and would love for some of you to join us on the dates below. There will be some things that are the same as the sanctuary, but a lot that are different.



At the Eveningstar:

- o The service will be at the same 10:00am time that you are used to.
- o Popcorn will be available!!
- o You're welcome to drink coffee or eat your breakfast during the service (coffee provided)
- o There will be a volunteer host to welcome you and answer any questions you have.
- o Live audio and video of the service will be projected on the big screen.

The Eveningstar will be open for services on November 23, December 7,14,21 and on January 11, 18, and 25. (Every Sunday through the end of January with the exception of those following holidays as we expect attendance to be less) The theater can accommodate about 60 people.

VISITORS AND NEWCOMERS CHAT



Visitors and Newcomers to UUCB are invited to stay after the service on the first Sunday of each month for an informal gathering in the May Sarton Room. Bring your

coffee and meet with representatives of the Membership Committee. Perhaps you have questions about UUCB and all of the ways that you can be involved, or perhaps you would like to learn about Unitarian Universalism. All are welcome.

LGBTQIA+

Contact: Kathy Glennon, kglennon1@comcast.net

 The LGBTQIA+ focus group is looking for new members. We welcome any and all members of the congregation who want to support in whatever ways possible members of our LGBTQIA+ communities. Email kglennon1@comcast.net if you are interested.



Question: *Where and how do I put my **VOLUNTEER SKILLS to work?***

ANSWER: Come to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick PARTNER FAIR on Saturday, January 24, 2026 (snow date January 31, 2026) from 11:00am-1:00pm to talk to current volunteers and community organization representatives!

For more info, contact Faith Barnes at faithb.56@gmail.com or Jill Scherer at jill.e.scherer@gmail.com Working for Justice Steering Group, Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick, 1 Middle St., Brunswick, ME 04011

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Concerts for a Cause

The mission of **Concerts for a Cause** is to hold a series of concerts to raise money for the church and local charities while sharing a variety of quality music with the Brunswick area community. The 2025-2026 season's charities will be Oasis Free Clinics and Immigration Legal Advocacy Project. If you have questions or comments about our concert series, email Sue at michaud_susan@comcast.net. See all the upcoming shows online at <https://www.uubrunswick.org/upcoming-events/concerts-for-a-cause/>



Fred Small

On Saturday, November 8th Concerts for a Cause held another full house for the Fred Small concert. His many fans who saw him many times in Cambridge before he became a UU minister were so excited to see him singing again, and they sang along with many of his songs. It was a special night, and we raised another \$1,241 for our charities. As an added bonus, he led a really meaningful church service the next day.

Save the Dates

We are lucky to have so many talented people in our church. Two of them will be performing for Concerts for a Cause this winter. In the dark of winter there is no better way to bring light into your lives than to see your friends performing on the big stage. I hope we can support these musicians by having a full house for both concerts.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17 - PEJEPCOT STATION



Pejepscot Station

Saturday, January 17th @ 7:30 pm

UUCB's own Ren Bernier will be bringing his banjo and his Bluegrass Band to the Concerts for a Cause stage on January 17th. Based in the village of Pejepscot (in Topsham, ME), Pejepscot Station has performed throughout southern Maine since forming in 2011. Their repertoire is a mix of traditional and contemporary bluegrass, Americana, and some "bluegrassified" folk and country songs. Wide vocal harmonies and Ren's ever-present wit make for an enjoyable and fun show for all.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7 - JUD CASWELL AND LISA REDFERN



Jud Caswell and Lisa Redfern

February 7 @ 7:30 pm

UUCB's much loved Jud Caswell and his friend Lisa Redfern, both award-winning singer-songwriters and favorites of the local folk scene, will share the stage for our February concert.

Jud is a master multi-instrumentalist, playing guitar, banjo, cittern, whistles and Irish drums. He plays acoustic music as well as some traditional folk and Irish music. With an angelic voice and guitar, Lisa has 12 solo recordings to her credit. She plays her own original music, folk songs, jazz standards, hymns, and lullabies.

Community Happenings

Join us for a

Seasonal Sing-Along



Sunday, December 14th
UUCB Sanctuary | 1 Middle St
2pm-4pm

Sponsored by:



Make your holiday themed group karaoke dreams come true! This festive, all ages event will be led by UUCB Music Director, Will Bristol! Healthy snacks and hot cocoa will be provided. "Ugly" x-mas sweaters are encouraged but not necessary. Scan the QR code to register. For more information email music-director@uubrunswick.org



Church Happenings and Announcements



Chalice Circles

Chalice Circles are small groups that meet six times per session. Chalice Circles offer a space to make connections, learn, and grow through open-hearted listening and honest personal reflection.

Winter Session Dates: (bi-weekly) December 28th- March 14th.
 Registration will open on December 8th
 Email lsf-director@uubrunswick.org for more information



UUCB Holiday Fair
 Dec 6th 9:00-3:00

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick invites the community to its beloved annual Holiday Fair on Saturday, December 6th. This festive tradition offers a wonderful opportunity to find unique gifts, enjoy delicious homemade treats, and celebrate the season with neighbors and friends.

What You'll Find:

- Fresh Balsam Wreaths
- Eats & Treats
- Holiday Café
- White Elephant Room
- Handcrafted by UUs
- Jewelry Room
- Live Music

Whether you're searching for the perfect gift, a festive decoration, or simply want to enjoy good food and community spirit, the UUCB Holiday Fair offers something for everyone.

For more information:
 Visit the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick at 1 Middle Street, Brunswick, or contact the church office.
 The Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick welcomes all to this community event. Come for the shopping, stay for the warmth and holiday cheer!

Working for Justice

MAINE UU STATE ACTION NETWORK (MUUSAN)



Contact: Betsy Williams, bwilliams120@gmail.com

The Maine Unitarian Universalist State Action Network came out in force (including many from UUCB!) to defeat Question #1 on the November ballot. We have successfully secured the future of absentee voting and held off requiring state-issued IDs at the time of voting. Thanks to all who canvassed, put up lawn signs, and voted No on 1!

If you would like to stay in touch with MUUSAN actions and are not currently on our Legislative List to receive emails, please email me at bwilliams120@gmail.com and I will add your name. Activity on the list will be minimal until the legislative session starts up in January.

HOUSING: WFJSG WELCOMES NEW FOCUS GROUP

Contact: Jaki Ellis, jakiellis.me@gmail.com

Working for Justice Steering Group is happy to welcome a new Housing focus group to our circle. This group will be led by Jaki Ellis, who is the liaison between UUCB and the Southern Maine Housing Collaborative. The new Housing focus group will encompass Tedford Housing and Habitat for Humanity. Jaki is one of two representatives of Tedford Housing on the Housing Collaborative team. There will be more information in the January Parish Messenger including a report on what has been accomplished locally this past year and recent housing initiatives approved by Governor Mills.



Working for Justice

DECEMBER CHARITY WITH SOUL: BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF BATH/BRUNSWICK

Contact: Steven Wood swood88@outlook.com



THEY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THE WORLD

We don't need to create potential; instead, we must defend it. Our community's children are waiting for Bigs to stand with them and inspire them to become their best selves. Since 1981, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick has operated under the belief that every child possesses incredible potential. By partnering with parents, guardians, volunteers, and others in the community, we ensure that each child in our program achieves higher aspirations, greater confidence, and stronger relationships.

Our programs pair at-risk and under-resourced children, "Littles," with adult and high school-aged mentors, "Bigs," who provide friendship, support, and guidance during the child's vital childhood and adolescent years. These relationships have the power to change lives, and the following outcomes show it:

- 100% improved emotional regulation
- 83% improved grades
- 79% improved mental well-being
- 100% greater social competence
- 78% decline in risky behaviors

We provide our services free of charge to families in Brunswick, Harpswell, and throughout Sagadahoc County. Every contribution, regardless of size, assists us in creating a brighter future for our children. We hope you will join us to provide Littles with stability, connection, and a pathway to a bright future.

WILL YOU STAND WITH THEM? Reach Out to Us!

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick
Carol Marquis, Executive Director
85 Maine Street Brunswick, ME 04011
bbbsbathbrunswick.org Office: 207.729.7736



GUN VIOLENCE SAFETY AND AWARENESS

Contact: Lynn Ellis, lynnsellis62@gmail.com

The Gun Violence Education and Awareness focus group of WFJSG has been tirelessly advocating for gun safety legislation and providing gun violence prevention education for over ten years. Efforts have garnered a few favorable bills. Over the past 5 years, the group has partnered with Maine Gun Safety Coalition with active involvement by UUCB members as well as a dedicated group of MUUSAN members. This past year the focus became a Referendum to pass a true Red Flag/ERPO measure. And WE did! On November 4 Mainers voted in favor of Question 2 by 63%. There continues to be an ongoing need to pursue more legislation, however, right now we are celebrating a resounding success in the passage of this referendum. Thank you to everyone who was involved. -- Lynn Ellis



IMMIGRANT JUSTICE – DRIVERS NEEDED! DRIVERS NEEDED! DRIVERS NEEDED!



Mid Coast New Mainers Group is looking for volunteers to assist members of the new Mainer community with transportation to English classes, medical appointments, and job training. Sign up for one ride per week or several depending on your schedule. We have found that putting together small groups that work together and cover for each other, if needed, are most beneficial to the driver and passenger as they develop trust and friendship. If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering, please contact Faith Barnes at faithb.56@gmail.com or (207) 751-2892.

Working for Justice

WABANAKI AWARENESS (FORMERLY "INDIGENOUS AWARENESS")

Contact: Catherine Cyrus, sweetfernfield@gmail.com

Check out the WFJ Wabanaki Awareness Group's new bulletin board in the vestibule! We hope the information there will help deepen our understanding of our shared colonial history and its impact on all of us as we continue to live in community with our Wabanaki neighbors. Each month a new question will be posted, and the answer to the question can be found in the displayed poster from the Pejepscot Portage Mapping Project.



This month's question is:



"What is the Amoscoogan and what is its significance to the Wabanaki?"

AMOSCOGGAN

(ANDROSCOGGIN RIVER)

WHAT IS IN A NAME?

THE NAME "ANDROSCOGGIN" IS LIKELY AN ANGLICIZED VARIATION OF THE ABENAKI WORD "AMOSCOGGAN," WHICH PROBABLY MEANS "PLACE TO SMOKE (OR CURE) FISH."

MANY NAMES--INCLUDING "AMOSCOGGAN"--REFERRED TO FISHING BECAUSE WABANAKI RELIED ON THE SPRINGTIME MIGRATIONS OF SALMON, SHAD, ALEWIVES, AND STURGEON WHO SWAM UP RIVER TO SPAWN.

THESE FISH MIGRATIONS WERE IMMENSE. IN 1673, THE FISHING OPERATION AT THOMAS PURCHASE'S PEJEPSCOT FALLS TRADING POST HARVESTED 40 BARRELS OF SALMON (APPROXIMATELY SIX TONS) IN LESS THAN A MONTH!

During the 1600s and 1700s, Wabanaki inhabited seasonal communities at various points along the river, including Pejepscot (Brunswick), Amitgonpontook (Auburn), and Rockamecook (Canton).

These and other names described particular places along the Androscoggin River. They were more fully places where Wabanaki cultivated responsibilities and relationships.

Colonists changed the river. Heavy fishing and then a dam built at Pejepscot in 1753 reduced fish populations. Later industrial pollution contaminated the remaining fish with toxins like dioxin and mercury.

What is in a name? In a river that Wabanaki named for catching and drying abundant fish, people are now advised by the State of Maine to eat no more than 6-12 fish meals per year from the river.



There are still good reasons for restoring fish runs, including for the health of local ecosystems and Wabanaki relations with those lives and places, but small fish populations and high toxicity levels remind us how colonization challenges Wabanaki's relationships with the waters and lands of their home.

Working for Justice

BRUNSWICK AREA TEEN CENTER



New Faces and Teen Center Traditions

With each new school year, we welcome wave after wave of newcomers, as friends of current members spread the word about our center. Sometimes it feels like a dozen new students are filling out paperwork every other day.

Fortunately, our Teen Center veterans are always ready to help. Many teens have taken on the role of tour guide, enthusiastically showing the newbies around and explaining the rules and registration forms. Next year, we may need to provide some formal training for our tour guides, as several of their tours seem to focus mainly on where to find the food!

Looking Ahead: Friendsgiving

As the holiday season gets underway, we're getting ready for one of our favorite traditions: Friendsgiving. On this special day, we invite as many kids as possible to join us in the kitchen for cooking and baking, then gather to share a meal together. This year, it's been a pleasant surprise to see the kids asking about Friendsgiving so early and offering suggestions for improvement. While everyone has different ideas about side dishes and desserts, one thing is clear—they're unanimous in wanting perogies as the main course

again. Although it's uncertain how many years it takes for a dish to become a tradition, perogies seem well on their way to earning that status at the Teen Center. Hopefully, last year's extensive cleanup won't become a recurring tradition!

Holiday Party and Community Support



No discussion of the holiday season would be complete without mentioning our annual holiday party. The kids are already excited about the prospect of receiving gift bags again this year, and we're happy to say it's a definite yes!

We're still gathering ideas for what to include, but there will certainly be fun socks, fidget toys, candy, and a gift card in each bag. Our goal is to hand out another 100 bags this year, and we'll need plenty of support to make it happen.

If you'd like to help, we're accepting donations of the mentioned items or monetary contributions to support the holiday party shopping. For questions or to get involved, please contact us at teens@peopleplusmaine.org.

~Taylor and the Teens

IMMIGRANT JUSTICE – ICE VERIFIER TRAINING & MAINE ICE WATCH HOTLINE

Contact: Faith Barnes, Faihb.56@gmail.com

[The Maine ICE Watch Hotline](https://maineimmigrantrights.org/mirc-resource-hub/), <https://maineimmigrantrights.org/mirc-resource-hub/> is a new statewide tool created to verify reports of immigration enforcement activity and connect immigrant families with resources and support.

The hotline — (207) 544-9989 — is a project of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition, the People's Coalition for Safety & Justice, and other community partners. Organizers say the goal is to provide accurate, real-time information about ICE and Border Patrol operations in Maine and to help families stay safe amid [a period of heightened enforcement and fear](#).

Over 100 community volunteers have already been trained to support the hotline, serving as either operators who take calls, or "verifiers" who are dispatched to confirm or refute reported sightings of immigration enforcement activity. Verifiers are community members who document enforcement actions and help prevent misinformation from spreading.

Last week the hotline received reports ranging from Lewiston, Portland, Augusta, New Sharon, Bangor, Mount Desert Island... so we anticipate a need for trained verifiers in our area.

ICE Verifier Training Rescheduled to January

Cat Whitaker and Janet Ostrov are offering the two-hour verifier training in Brunswick in January. They will be in touch in early January with potential dates and times to accommodate as many people as possible. Please contact Janet Osterov at 518-265-5643 or janetostrov@gmail.com if you have questions, or if you would like to be added to our list for the January training.



UUCB Art Gallery

DECEMBER ART SHOW: MARLI THIBODEAU, CONTEMPORARY ARTIST

Artist's Statement

Marli Thibodeau (b. 1964) is a contemporary artist born in the Hudson Valley of New York, where she began her love affair with art, nature, and dance. Influenced by the natural world and the lineage of Abstract Expressionism, she informed her direction towards non-objective paintings.

Mostly self-taught, her study of art and movement creates a colorful choreography in her work. In 2015, with photographer Karen Divine, she conceived the 'Being Set Free' project, a global multidisciplinary collaboration of artists.

She immerses in the beauty of the world around her and makes an inquiry into self-discovery through movement and visual art; curious about how our interior world informs outward expression.

Thibodeau maintains a year-round studio in Rockland, Maine. Her work has been exhibited in the Northeast and is held in private collections in US and Europe.



*Image: Art
by Marli
Thibodeau*

*Please take
some time to
enjoy the
artwork in
Fellowship
Hall. Each
month the
Gallery
Committee
installs a new
exhibit.
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**The Parish Messenger Deadline for the January issue is Saturday, December 20th.
Please send your content to: parish-messenger-editor@uubrunswick.org.**